

**Incorporating a Student Centric Perspective
on Differentiation for the
College of Liberal Arts (CLA) Brand**

A CAPSTONE PROJECT
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

ALISON K. BLOMSTER

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

ADVISER: JOHN EIGHMEY

AUGUST 2014

© 2014 Alison K. Blomster. All rights reserved.

The University of Minnesota shall provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. Direct requests to the University of Minnesota Libraries.

About the Author

Alison Blomster has worked for the University of Minnesota for fifteen years and for the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) for the last nine months. She is energized by the mission of the University of Minnesota and in helping students find success. In her current position as Director of the Student Information Office, she leads the team responsible for providing support to college advising for approximately 14,000 undergraduate CLA students and is considered the “process expert,” for making process and policy recommendations to CLA Student Services. Alison is responsible for planning and managing new student orientation for approximately 4,500 freshman and transfer students annually (a process worth about \$127 million dollars to the university annually) and assists with CLA commencement for approximately 3,500 students annually (a process that’s priceless to family, friends, faculty and of course the graduates themselves).

For this project, Alison identified that CLA lacks consistent messaging to undergraduate students throughout their four years in CLA and lacks a brand promise that truly differentiates it from the other colleges and promotes the core values of the college. The author believes the best way to message is with a dynamic two-way communication system, whereby current student perceptions are taken into account to build a brand promise and messaging for the college. Currently CLA does not have a strategic communication plan. Alison plans to share the results of this project with the Director for the newly developed Office of Institutional Advancement in order to assist in branding and in developing a strategic communication plan for the College of Liberal Arts.

Acknowledgements

Alison would like to express her gratitude to the following people who assisted with this capstone project:

Her wife, Beth M. Nelson, who supported her through the entire Strategic Communications Program and especially the capstone project. Her sons, Matt & Zach Nelson, who had to give up the dining room table for several months while writing of the capstone took place. Her friends Les and DeAnn for their support. Her professors from the Strategic Communication Program, who’s supportive feedback helped guide her learning process and professional growth through this project. Cohort 8, whose lively discussion made these last two years exciting, entertaining, and enlightening and whose support on this project made it seem manageable. University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts Student Services staff who assisted with background information about the CLA past, current and future branding efforts. University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus students who took the time to provide their in-depth responses about CLA branding by participating in the focus groups, in-depth interviews and completing the online survey.

Thank you.

Table of Contents

About the Author	i
Acknowledgements	i
List of Tables	iii
Introduction.....	1
Literature Review	3
Research Questions.....	15
Methodology.....	20
Results/Findings.....	27
Limitations	47
Discussion	49
Recommendations and Future Research.....	52
References	58
Appendix A: Competitive Analysis for CLA	67
Appendix B: Focus Group Questions	69
Appendix C: Focus Group Transcription	71
Appendix D: ZMET Interview Steps & Questions.....	117
Appendix E: ZMET Single Word Response Coding	119
Appendix F: ZMET Paired-Construct Coding	130
Appendix G: ZMET Consensus Map.....	132
Appendix H: Online Survey Questions	133
Appendix I: Focus Group Coding Results	141
Appendix J: Online Survey Charts	143

List of Tables & Figures

Table 1	Reported Participant Engagement.....	42
Figure 1	ZMET Consensus Map.....	31
Figure 2	Engagement Opportunities Graph	41
Figure 3	Connections to People in CLA Graph.....	43
Figure 4	Financial Value of CLA Education Graph.....	46
Figure 5	Personal Value of CLA Education Graph.....	47

Introduction

In 2008 and 2009 making the case for a liberal arts education changed with the impact of the Great Recession. Would a liberal arts undergraduate education be worth the value if a student couldn't get a job after graduation? With college costs on the rise, a four year undergraduate degree at the University of Minnesota topping out at an average of between \$100,496 and \$125,496 for in-state tuition (per year breakdown of \$25,124 per resident, on campus and \$31,374 for nonresident, on campus) graduating with an increased debt can put college out of reach for many. In a list of top ten higher education trends for 2013 from the Lawlor Group they say that "families are reevaluating the price they are willing to pay for a college education" (LAWLOR: Intelligent Marketing Solutions for Higher Education, 2013). While education continues to be viewed as a good long-term investment for the most part, since the recession, more students see the STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics as a more sure investment due to the overall pay scale for jobs after college (Jaschik, 2014).

CLA was established in 1868 and according to the CLA constitution it was determined "in the broadest sense [that] a liberal education is one which frees us from the limitations placed by ignorance on our powers of judgment and choice" (University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts 2002, p. 3). Later in 1966, the College of Liberal Arts constitution outlined more specifically the goals of the college that provide students with an education to engage a breadth and depth of knowledge; to develop skills to shape their world; to communicate effectively; to encourage independent, critical, creative thought; to develop themselves into imaginative, resourceful human beings who are committed to

service and leadership (University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts, 2002). The Chambers Report (1980) would help establish an updated curricula for CLA with “goals that were to sharpen critical thinking, to enlarge esthetic appreciation, and to promote learning experiences that transcend the mere learning of facts, methods, and theories” (Lehmberg & Pflaum, 2001, p. 143). CLA has retained these values and they are reinforced by most staff and faculty. However, some in the college and at the University of Minnesota have a challenge articulating the values as they are not all that readily accessible. Articulation of the values of the college, also understood to be part of the brand value, should be understood by all the stakeholders. These values plus the communication messages, perceptions of the organization, the people who work for and interact with the organization, and as Kotler also included, “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to differentiate them from those of competitors” add up to the collection of impressions as interpreted in the mind of the consumer or brand value (as cited Keller, 1993 p. 2). The brand value of the college, as understood by the college community, could be included the development of a brand promise that could help to more easily identify and articulate them. A brand promise is important because it embodies the trust that the consumer develops for the organization over time. It’s important for an organization, like the College of Liberal Arts, to meet the standards and values they promise in an authentic way and in a way that resonates with their student consumer. The brand promise as outlined by Wheatley identifies “these expectations [as] becom[ing] a promise by the institution (in this case, the college or university) to its customers (for this research, its students), which demonstrates that it

values them and the relationship and unique interaction they have” (Rogers & Jackson, 2012, p. 154).

The competitive landscape for the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) was identified through a competitive analysis (see Appendix A). CLA is the largest college at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus, with an average total enrollment of 14,000 undergraduate students and a total of 70 majors (Discover CLA, 2012), but with the increased interest in STEM disciplines, the college began to compete more within the University against the College of Science and Engineering (CSE) and the College of Biological Sciences (CBS) and even Carlson School of Management (CSOM) to a degree, all of which are much smaller colleges than CLA. Traditionally, Minnesota State University, Mankato, University of Minnesota Duluth, and St. Cloud State have been the liberal arts colleges competing for graduating high school applicants (Minnesota Office of Higher Education, 2014). While North Dakota State University, Arts Humanities and Social Science; University of North Dakota and University of Wisconsin-Madison have been the colleges out of state competing for and receiving the top number of applications from Minnesota high school students (Minnesota Office of Higher Education, 2014).

Literature Review

Branding Higher Education

While the Office of Admissions is in the business of marketing the University of Minnesota to prospective students, each college is responsible for providing their brand message to Admissions to incorporate it into their overall marketing efforts. Because

CLA does not have a strong, authentic, or differentiated brand value statement, Admissions has opted to use the University of Minnesota's branding statement ("Driven to Discover"), thus the call to action that Admissions has adopted from the University's branding statement is "Discover CLA." The problem is, after a student has "discovered" CLA at the start of their freshman year, there is no more brand value message and a brand value message, or brand promise, is one that must be maintained over time. "Brand promise statements are expressions of what customers, students, and their parents should expect through consistent interaction" (Rogers & Jackson, 2012, p. 154). CLA should have a brand message that is specific, accurate and consistent with the overall message that starts during the admissions process and continues throughout the four years (in some cases four plus years) the student attends CLA. Fundamentally, high levels of brand awareness and a positive brand image should increase the probability of brand choice, as well as produce greater consumer (and retailer) loyalty and decrease vulnerability to competitive marketing actions" (Keller, 1993, p. 8). Thus, a brand promise is used to help customers believe in, become loyal to, and share value with the product or experience. The student experience should match the information that admissions, on behalf of the college, and the college is providing to prospective students and their families so that "the message conveyed by the institution during recruitment is one that is consistent with the ongoing experiences of the students who choose to enroll and remain" (Rodgers & Jackson, 2012, p. 163). As Moor has also pointed out, "At root, a brand is the promise of an experience" (Moore, 2010, p. 57).

There continues to be a recognizable interest in the University of Minnesota as applications continue to hold steady and it made it into the *US News and World Report* top 25 public schools list (US News & World Report, 2014). CLA has an external reputation of having good faculty with some of the top departments in the country and has one of the largest study abroad programs in the country. However, since the recession, the increases in college tuition, and a reputation that liberal arts degrees don't get high paying jobs, the average numbers of current students wanting to transfer out of CLA has increased. As quoted from one focus group participant, "...well [CLA] had a bad rep[utation] with the people I was talking to [be]cause it was like you're just in the reject college because you don't have a specialized major." There are 60% of undergraduate students in CLA who are CLA centric students, meaning they are pursuing CLA majors with intent on receiving a degree from the college. While the applications to the University are not an issue, the issue for CLA is that over a three year average only 60% of students enrolled in CLA are CLA centric, and 40% are a mix of pre-professional students who have the hope of, (and many who do), transferring out of CLA and into CSE, CBS or CSOM ("Enrolled CLA Students," 2014). The percentages of CLA centricity information is collected from student major declarations at the 60-credit mark, usually a student's sophomore year, and tracked in the MyCLA Statistics database. But with a stronger CLA brand that starts with newly admitted students and continues with them through all their years in CLA, especially from the time students are admitted into the spring of their sophomore year when they have to declare a major, CLA could potentially transform non-CLA centric students into CLA centric students. Because CSE,

CBS, and CSOM are smaller colleges, few students are actually accepted for inter college transfer. The only other option for students who don't want to be in CLA is to leave the University, pushing down retention and graduation rates, and even more importantly for the college and the University, creating a financial predicament. With a goal of transitioning 10% of non-CLA centric students, who might otherwise leave the University, to CLA centric students using a strong, targeted CLA brand message, CLA could increase funding for the University by almost \$16 million annually (calculated by multiplying 10% of the total non-CLA centric students, about 560 students, by the average yearly tuition of instate and outstate students of \$28,249).

Industry trends overall since the recession have been that the prices of colleges have gone up and the guarantee of jobs with a college degree have gone down. (LAWLOR: Intelligent Marketing Solutions for Higher Education, 2013). While there are career opportunities for liberal arts graduates, do current students see the value and do they connect it with the CLA goals and values? A university is an organization and "an organization is, before anything, a subsystem of a larger economic, social, and political system, and the first condition to ensure organization's survival is to make sure it is not rejected by the system it belongs to" (Pricopie, 2007, p. 201).

Student as Consumer of the College Experience

The College of Liberal Arts accounts for half the total undergraduate tuition dollars for the University of Minnesota, generating an average income of \$395.5 million. With that kind of income generation and a strong, targeted brand that's inclusive of

stakeholder values, CLA could become almost a half a billion-dollar brand. (Tuition income is calculated from averaging one year of instate and outstate tuition multiplied by the total number of CLA undergraduate students.) The College of Education and Human Development has the second highest income generation in undergraduate tuition dollars with only 36% of what CLA brings in (tuition income is calculated from averaging one year of instate and outstate tuition multiplied by the total number of approximately 4,900 CEHD undergraduate students). There are on average 14,000 undergraduate students enrolled in CLA with a demographic breakdown of 19% students of color, 59% women, and 6% international students (Discover CLA, 2012). As previously stated, 60% of CLA students have CLA centric majors, leaving 40% who don't. Those who do not have CLA centric majors often try to transfer into one of the other colleges at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus, but many are not accepted and must remain in CLA. Of those students who are not accepted into CSE, CBS or CSOM after applying to transfer from CLA, they leave the University. Every time a non-CLA centric student who was admitted to CLA leaves University they take their tuition dollars with them. So if up to 40% of CLA admitted students want to leave each year and 10% up to 40% do leave each year, that creates an unsustainable budget model for CLA and for the University.

“Because CLA is the University’s largest college, its welfare has always been central to the reputation of the University as a whole” (Lehmberg & Pflaum, 2001, p. 268-269).

However, during the Governor Pawlenty years there were significant decreases in funding. In 2003, the University budget was cut by \$197.9 million (MPR News, 2003) and again in 2009 a \$151 million reduction pushing funding levels back to the 1990s

(Government and Community Relations, 2012). This shifted the cost responsibility from the state to the undergraduate students, who now more than ever are customers of their college experience.

There are opposing viewpoints as to whether or not a student should be considered as a “customer” as they are not purchasing a product. Those who are strongly in the camp of students not as customer suggest there should not be an economic exchange for the learning or a grade (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Delucchi & Korgen, 2002; Gioia & Thomas, 1996; Rodgers & Jackson, 2012). On the other hand, there are both financial and symbolic transactions taking place between students and college institutions, thus there is pressure on the college institution to provide customer satisfaction to students both in terms of classroom and extra-curricular experiences (Bowden, 2011; LeBalnc & Nguyen, 1999; Moore, 2010; Ng & Forbes, 2009; Pricopie, 2007; Waeraas & Solbakk, 2009). “The typical business customer knows exactly what is being purchased and for what purpose whereas a student is buying an educational setting and environment that can be seen; but much of the educational product is intangible and unknown” (Rodgers & Jackson, 2012, p. 155). However, taking into account the Social Exchange Theory where independent interactions have the capacity to build quality relationships through a reciprocal economic or symbolic exchange (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), “the student is the consumer of higher education and students’ satisfaction in the consumption of a university experience is important” (Ng & Forbes, 2009, p. 44).

So, even though students don't know exactly what is being purchased in terms of the specifics of an educational experience, there is an understanding on behalf of the student from participating in the process of getting a K-12 education that there has to be relationship building for a worthwhile reciprocal exchange to take place. Thus the student has to participate not only economically, but symbolically (non-materially) as well, to obtain the overall value of the education the purpose of which, in terms of the Social Exchange Theory for the purposes of this paper, has been shown to be a better job due to having a college degree. However, if it appears that the cost of a college education is greater than the resulting job benefit, then the cost to the student, both financially and in terms of *experiencing college*, is no longer worth constructing a reciprocal relationship, and the student will leave or not engage in the first place. Several of the articles (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Delucchi & Korgen, 2002; Durkin, McKenna & Cummins, 2012; Rodgers & Jackson, 2012) likened the student to being a "consumer" of higher education in that they are consuming the experience. They are in effect "buying the benefits that a degree can provide in terms of employment, status and lifestyle" (as cited in Naude & Ivy, 1999) not buying a degree (Durkin, McKenna & Cummins, 2012, p. 155) and having "their identity forever intertwined with [the college]" (Moore, 2010, p. 61) and in this way the college experience becomes the "product" that students are "consuming."

Consumer Centric Branding

The college has to provide what the student wants for the student to continue to find value, and therefore the college should take into account the perceptions of the students as one of the many stakeholders it's responsible to. As explained by Emerson, "a resource will continue to flow only if there is a valued return contingent upon it" (1976, p. 359). The point of a university is to educate students, but the students have to be there to educate. The students have to actively participate for "the learning experience [to be] cocreated" thus resulting in a "cocreation of value, the satisfaction of the learning experience is attributed to both the university and the student" (Ng & Forbes, 2009, p. 48).

Most articles (Christensen & Olson, 2002; Duncan & Moriarty, 1998; Gengler & Reynolds, 1995; Gioia, Schultz, & Corley, 2000; Keller, 1993 & 2003; Ng & Forbes, 2009; Roedder, Loken, Kim, & Monga, 2006; Sheth, Sisodia, & Sharma, 2000; Wansink, 2003; Xie, Bagozzi, & Troye, 2008; Yi, Phelps, Roskos-Ewoldsen, 1998; Zaltman, 1997; Zaltman & Coulter, 1995) agreed that organizational identity and stakeholder image are related, but varied on the degree of relatedness and also from which perspective the relationship was initiated and or maintained. These varied perspectives of relationships between the organizational identity and stakeholder image is how the articles are linked together. Abratt's (1989) article identifies a differentiation between the two, where the relationship is furthest apart. Where the development of the organizational image is created from an untouchable place from within the organization and delivered to the consumer to ingest and as long as the message is delivered repeatedly and consistently over time, the consumer will relate that image with the product, brand or organization.

Brickson (2007) indicates that the organization should provide a social value image to the stakeholder, but only on their terms. Other articles (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Chapleo, 2005; Gray & Balmer, 1998; Grunig, 1993; Moore, 2010; Pricopie, 2007; Rodgers & Jackson, 2012; van Riel, Balmer, 1997; Vàsquez, Sergi, & Cordelier, 2013; Waeraas & Solbakk, 2009) are a blend and offer a view of the relationship that starts out with the organizational identity as a strictly manager controlled message and organizational perspective derived solely from those inside the organization, to an organizational identity that involves the introduction of consumer perceptions derived from a stakeholder perspective of the organization. The articles also suggest that beyond simply comparing stakeholder image to the organizational identity, organizational actions should reflect stakeholder values based on the interrelationship and the duality between the two. When the stakeholder perspectives can manifest in the organizational identity, communications about the organizational value are created that truly resonate with the stakeholder, thus solidifying a tighter bond between the stakeholder, in most cases the customer, and the organization or the product. Christensen and Olson's (2002) article identifies connectedness from the relational perspective of the stakeholder where image (that which is external stakeholders' internalized beliefs about what an organization is) is directly influencing the organizational identity (that which is generally derived solely from an internal managerial perspective).

The research (Abratt, 1989; Brexendorf & Kernstock, 2007; Brickson, 2007; Cornelissen, Haslam, & Balmer, 2007; Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994; Gioia & Thomas, 1996; LeBalnc & Nguyen, 1999; Scott & Lane, 2000; Whetten, 2006) shows

that many organizations, including universities, do not place much value on learning about prior beliefs and values of the stakeholder or how they use other organizations as comparisons for creating organizational image. Also according to the research, corporate identity management is mainly a bureaucratic communication strategy that doesn't leave much room for stakeholders. This is because the focus of this communication strategy is really on organizational identity as it translates to external image as impressed upon stakeholders and not the stakeholder image of the organization as directly impressed upon manager's identity.

Organizational Branding

Many of the articles (Abratt, 1989; Brickson, 2007; Brexendorf & Kernstock, 2007; Chapleo, 2005; Gioia & Thomas, 1996; LeBalnc & Nguyen, 1999; Rodgers & Jackson, 2012; Scott & Lane, 2000; van Riel & Balmer, 1997; Vàsquez, et al., 2013) indicate there is a well-developed process for a cycle of communication that organizations use to convey their brand or identity value to external stakeholders. The articles spell out that it's very hierarchical in nature and stems directly from the organization itself. The designated organizational manager is responsible for carrying out the communications, which is based on their interpretation of an internalized organizational identity. The manager disseminates this communication in pictures, words, and actions. This externalized communication is supposed to become the organizational image that the external stakeholders perceive, consume and carry with them. Based on

this image perception, the external stakeholders then act in positive or negative ways toward the organization and the cycle repeats.

Articles that mentioned organizational identity and or image (Abratt, 1989; Brexendorf & Kernstock, 2007; Christensen & Olson, 2002; Gengler & Reynolds, 1995; Gioia et al., 2000; Gray & Balmer, 1998; Duncan & Moriarty, 1998; Grunig, 1993; Keller, 2003; Roedder et al., 2006; van Riel & Balmer, 1997; Zaltman, 1997; Zaltman & Coulter, 1995) are very clear that organizational identity, including organizational graphic symbols, is owned by the organization and the external stakeholder owns organizational image. Not only is organizational image owned by the external stakeholder, but it exists only in their mind. There is strong agreement among the authors that stakeholders are tied to organizations and have beliefs and thoughts, or images and mental models, of organizations. It could be very beneficial to understand what those images and mental models are in order to better assist organizations with their messaging and align them with their stakeholders to enact stronger stakeholder organizational loyalty, a mutually beneficial arrangement. There were only a handful (Brickson, 2007; Cornelissen et al., 2007; Wansink, 2003; Whetten, 2006) that disagreed on the basis that an organizational image is created, maintained and controlled by the internal organizational management.

While the research for some of the articles clearly recognizes that stakeholders are important to an organization (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Christensen & Olson, 2002; Duncan & Moriarty, 1998; Gengler & Reynolds, 1995; Gray & Balmer, 1998; Grunig, 1993; Keller, 1993 & 2003; Moore, 2010; Ng & Forbes, 2009; Pricopie, 2007; Roedder et

al., 2006; van Riel & Balmer, 1997; Waeraas & Solbakk, 2009; Xie et al., 2008; Yi et al., 1998; Zaltman, 1997; Zaltman & Coulter, 1995), very little focus is positioned on the stakeholders in terms of how to capture their organizational images. However, much of the research suggests that the rigidity of an organizational only perspective as led and carried out by the manager should be replaced and indicates the importance of listening to stakeholder feedback in order to fine-tune organizational identity and communications. These articles also suggest it is important to understand what the feedback means from the stakeholder perspective.

Consumer Perceptions Through Metaphor Elicitation

Most articles (Abratt, 1989; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Brickson, 2007; Brexendorf & Kernstock, 2007; Chapleo, 2005; Duncan & Moriarty, 1998; Gioia & Thomas, 1996; Gray & Balmer, 1998; Grunig, 1993; Keller, 1993 & 2003, LeBalnc & Nguyen, 1999; Moore, 2010; Ng & Forbes, 2009; Pricopie, 2007; Rodgers & Jackson, 2012; Scott & Lane, 2000; van Riel & Balmer, 1997; Vàsquez, et al., 2013; Waeraas & Solbakk, 2009; Xie et., al, 2008; Yi et., al, 1998) identified the communication or the communication strategy as starting from the organization and specifically from a managerial perspective. The majority of these articles, plus several others (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Christensen & Olson, 2002; Duncan & Moriarty, 1998; Gengler & Reynolds, 1995; Gray & Balmer, 1998; Grunig, 1993; Keller, 1993 & 2003; Moore, 2010; Ng & Forbes, 2009; Pricopie, 2007; Roedder et al., 2006; Waeraas & Solbakk, 2009; Xie et., al, 2008; Yi et., al, 1998; Zaltman, 1997; Zaltman & Coulter, 1995) did

mention the importance of the manager identifying and collecting stakeholder information or perceptions in order to inform the brand identity. In fact, Keller points out, “customer-based brand equity occurs when the consumer is familiar with the brand and holds some favorable, strong, and unique brand associations in memory” (Keller, 1993, p. 2). However, a minority of articles (Chapleo, 2005; Christensen & Olson, 2002; Delucchi & Korgen, 2002; Duncan & Moriarty, 1998; Durkin et al., 2012; Gengler & Reynolds, 1995; Keller, 2003; LeBalnc & Nguyen, 1999; Ng & Forbes, 2009; Roedder et al., 2006; Rodgers & Jackson, 2012; Xie et al., 2008, Zaltman, 1997; Zaltman & Coulter, 1995) identified a method or process for how the manager should collect such information. While researchers see the validity in the inclusion of stakeholder perceptions related to communicating the value of an organization, most do not identify how to collect stakeholder perceptions or interpret them in order to construct a more solid image to be used by the organization.

Only Zaltman (1997) and Christensen and Olson (2002) suggest managers should ascertain their stakeholders’ mental models before creating communications about the organizational value. Mental models can be extracted from stakeholders’ memory by way of metaphor elicitation or put another way, through storytelling, and are initially created out of images and experiences that a person has. A metaphor, simply put “involves understanding and experiencing one thing in terms of another” according to Lakoff and Johnstone (as cited in Zaltman, 1997, p. 425). Because “thought arises from images” and images are “internal representations used in information processing” and “are most often visual” according to Kosslyn (as cited in Zaltman, 1997, p. 424), representation of this

information is understood through the use of metaphor. All of these internal, visual images are stored in memory as organized constructs or mental models. Mental models are important because they can be accessed for applying existing metaphors to new images and experiences and can be used in the creation of new ones. Metaphors “are powerful because they hide as well as reveal thoughts and feelings” (Zaltman, 1997, p. 425). As Wansink (2003) points out, “the reason for people’s purchasing decisions are not always apparent” (p. 113), therefore “in-depth questioning” can be used to “reveal a deeper reason for purchasing a product” (p. 114).

So, a metaphor then, is an actionable way to learn a person’s mental models, or what associations the consumer has connected with experiences and images related to a product in their memory. By eliciting metaphors that exist in memory, a manager can analyze them and start to construct meaning on existing mental models in terms of the organization. Then managers can create communications about organizational value. Because mental models are used in consumer thinking and behavior, “sensitivity to metaphor is thus even more important because managers and consumer are likely to process information metaphorically even when that is not the communicator’s intent” (Zaltman, 1997, p. 425). It’s clear from these articles that by not including or only minimally including stakeholder’s input on organizational communication through their perceptions of organizational image, organizations are missing an opportunity to develop more critically targeted communication strategies as well as messages. Zaltman indicates that “by developing methods for engaging and/or monitoring imageic activity more directly, managers and customers can be moved closer to the way their thought occurs

and thereby provide more complete representations of their thought and accounts of their behaviors” (1997, p. 425).

Social Exchange Theory and Elaboration Likelihood Model

Student customer or consumer perceptions obtained through the use of metaphor will deepen the understanding of the value of a reciprocal relationship. The Social Exchange Theory and the Elaboration Likelihood Model explore central processing and effortful thinking versus the peripheral processing, which involves less effortful thinking and therefore will stay with the student for less time. If there is to be consistent organizational loyalty to the college over time, it’s important for students to deeply consider it as they struggle to determine if their education and experiences (also understood to be the product the students are purchasing) are worth the final outcome. When a positive reciprocal relationship between the student and a college occurs, in terms of academic success or personal growth, and changes the student’s attitude, how deeply does that change in attitude for the student need to be and what are those experiences that are most salient for the student?

When students report high involvement, their attitudes in relation to their educational experience will be more salient. According to Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann (1983) where there is “greater correspondence between attitudes and behaviors under high involvement (central route) than under low involvement (peripheral route)” (1983, p. 144). That is to say, those attitudes formed by high involvement with more effort in thinking will be more resilient over time and less susceptible to negative stigma, which is

a benefit for an organization seeking consistent organizational loyalty from consumers over time.

Research Questions

Trends show that in peak earning years CLA graduates surpass all but CSE graduates and are more able to flex with new and changing industries and jobs (Humphreys & Kelly, 2014). This reality should help make CLA a fairly attractive college for undergraduate students to attend and graduate from. Yet negative perceptions persist and add to a decrease in retention rates. **What student perceptions could be used in a brand promise to help the College of Liberal Arts better differentiate itself among other University of Minnesota and Minnesota colleges?** Along with this question it can be asked, can current CLA centric students with positive perceptions of the college become brand ambassadors to help identify for those who are not CLA centric, and for those students who haven't yet applied to the University, that a liberal arts degree is a valuable degree? The research will focus on the current, CLA centric undergraduate population as they are often the ones who represent the college. "A student's option for a university or another can be strongly influenced by the opinion of the current students – which confirms that the best branding starts from the inside, not with a newspaper ad" (Pricopie, 2007, p. 203).

There are both formal and informal ways that current students can influence prospective CLA students. At the University of Minnesota Twin Cities Campus, current students are on the front lines of recruiting and retention. They communicate with

prospective, newly admitted and first year students in a variety of ways. Current students share anecdotes about their college experiences with prospective students during admissions phone canvassing and college visits, during the campus tours they guide, during orientation as Orientation Leaders, and during the First Year Experience Program as Program Assistants. Informally, students have their own social networks where they pass on their communications about their college experience. These social networks, both online and offline, can include siblings and friends still in high school, friends who attend other colleges and universities, former high school teachers and counselors. A well articulated, authentic, resonate brand promise could be something internalized by these students as “the authenticity of the promise conveyed by a brand name is particularly important in higher education, where the college or university brand becomes part of individuals’ identities, one of the key badges; that we all wear in understanding and explaining ourselves” (Moore, 2010, p. 57).

Brand loyalty can be adopted based on a well articulated, authentic, resonate brand promise that could help to attract CLA centric and retain non-CLA centric students. Brand loyalty “occurs when favorable beliefs and attitudes for the brand are manifested in repeat buying behavior” or in this case student retention” (Keller, 1993, p. 8). With a strong, authentic brand promise developed in part from the positive CLA centric student experience, the author believes that CLA could set a goal to increase their number of CLA centric students to 70% in the first year and maybe 80% in the second year. By better positioning CLA majors as those that connect with the immediacy of job or research prospects post college *and* the positive, long-term job growth and development

forecast, branding could all have an impact in terms of transforming the college as a whole.

Methodology: Primary Qualitative Research

Focus Group

A focus group was held by inviting a convenience sample of University of Minnesota undergraduate students between the ages of 18 and 22 who are currently enrolled at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus College of Liberal Arts to participate. The focus group was set up to help determine current impressions of the College of Liberal Arts. Specifically the focus group looked at how students currently enrolled in the college are identifying with the college. Questions were asked related to importance of college, applying to the college, initial impressions of the college, more recent impressions and definitions of the college. Of those who were invited, nine participated.

The incentive to participate in this evening focus group was \$10 gift card to either Chipotle or Starbucks Coffee. One moderator asked a total of 16 questions over the course of an hour and a half. The focus group was recorded by a Flip® video camera for later review and transcription. Moderator questions and transcriptions can be found in Appendix B and C respectively. After the focus group, the notes were compiled and the digital video footage transcribed. The digital video footage was reviewed twice by the author, once for the transcription and once along with the transcription for accuracy. Grammar and other idiosyncrasies in spoken language were not edited to ensure

authenticity in meaning. From the notes and transcription, themes emerged regarding the College of Liberal Arts and codes were developed based on the emergent themes. Each transcribed phrase was paired to a code and then the number of times codes were used was counted in order start to interpret impressions of the college. This process was completed twice by the author. Themes were identified and recorded, as were some key insights. Themes were analyzed and a percentage of the total phrases count was calculated. These results will be used to help formulate quantitative survey questions in future research.

In-depth Interviews

The second primary qualitative research method used was the Zaltman metaphor-elicitation technique or ZMET process. It was used “to gain consumer insight by first eliciting and then mapping consumers’ knowledge structures” (Christensen & Olson, 2002) to identify key student “consumer” insights into the College of Liberal Arts. Twelve current CLA undergraduate students were interviewed using the ZMET in order to identify their perceived CLA core values, which could be leveraged for possible branding in the future. As current students, how do they identify with the college and do they resonate with the current CLA value proposition, which states that CLA offers more than 60 majors in the social sciences, arts, and humanities, has departments that rank among the best in the nation, has internationally renowned faculty, is an international community, and is one of the nation’s strongest centers of the study of world languages and cultures (Office of Admissions Office of Undergraduate Education, 2010)? How can

CLA use the resulting data to learn more about what students find important in considering how to better attract and retain CLA major centric students?

Twelve students were selected based on snowball sampling from one CLA communication class, the CLA First Year Experience program, and CLA Student Services student Office Assistants. Participants were between 18 and 22 years old, and included 5 second-year students, 4 third-year students, and 3 fourth-year students, 3 males and 9 females. The incentive was \$10 gift card to either Chipotle or Starbucks Coffee. The interviewer asked a series of questions in five distinct steps over the course of an hour and a half. The ZMET in-depth interviews were recorded by a Flip® video camera for later review and transcription. Interviewer steps and questions can be found in Appendix D.

For the interview process, each participant had about a week prior to the interview to think about the College of Liberal Arts and select eight to ten pictures that reminded them of the college. According to Zaltman & Coulter “Pictures typically represent basic concepts and therefore useful tools for understanding consumers’ thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Pictures, then, can serve as entry points for exploring other consumer concepts and represent a natural and efficient way for consumers to convey higher order constructs” (Zaltman & Coulter, 1995). The interview was based on asking questions about the pictures they had selected. There were five interview process steps, which included a variety of probing questions.

The interviews consisted of the following steps:

Steps.

Step 1 – The first step included a list of initial questions about each of the pictures to start the elicitation process. These were questions such as, “How does this picture make you feel?” “Tell me a story about this picture?” and “How does this picture remind you of the College of Liberal Arts?” These initial questions were followed up with questions that restated and summarized their answers for clarification as well as more deeply probing “why” questions. During this initial step in the process each participant was slightly apprehensive sharing information about their first picture, as though they were worried about describing it *wrong*. But with some reassurance from the interviewer that there was no *wrong* answer, they grew more comfortable by the second picture and they were very forthcoming with information about the rest of their pictures. The participants became very willing, almost excited, to share their feelings about their pictures, but the stories about the pictures were challenging for each participant. But, every picture did have a story related to it, some more detailed than others, and this provided the insight into the metaphors that the participant was using to connect with CLA. Every story related to the pictures was positive, with the exception of one where a mom was specifically scolding a child, which was related to the story of a parent trying to talk a child out of attending the College of Liberal Arts.

Step 2 - The next step was for the participant to sort the pictures into meaningful piles or groups. In some cases, the participant had one picture set aside that they couldn’t group with the other pictures.

Step 3 - Once the pictures were sorted into piles, laddering questions were asked for the third step to find links between the pictures. The interviewer pulled out two pictures from

the sorted pile and asked the participant to compare pictures to find similarities and differences and describe problems when they looked at the pictures. At the end of step three, participants were asked to select the picture that most represented how they felt about the college.

Step 4 – The picture the participant selected that most represented how they felt about the College of Liberal Arts was then used to have the participant envision himself/herself in the picture and describe the scene. The participants were asked to imagine that they were in the picture and how they felt. They were asked what was around them and what were they thinking. This was followed by a selection of a second picture for them to repeat the process of envisioning themselves in the picture, in a scene, with the same questions.

Step 5 - In step five participants were asked some sensory image questions related to sounds, smells, touch in relation to the College of Liberal Arts.

Coding the Responses.

After the interviews, the notes were compiled and the digital video footage transcribed into an aggregate response matrix in single word responses by the author. The digital video footage was reviewed twice by the author, once for the transcription and once along with the transcription for accuracy. Single word responses from each participant were counted in terms frequency, yielding 15,197 words. Single word constructs with a frequency of 60% or more that were used by each of the individual participant were combined in a single list and then sorted by overall frequency of use to come up with a final list of 57 single word constructs. The list of single words can be

found in Appendix E. The list of 57 words were used to go back through each interview and listen for the word pairings or constructs to identify the range of concepts and metaphors used by each participant. The word pairings were recorded in terms of their paired-construct relationships, which can found in Appendix F. Once that was done, the most frequently used constructs used by at least 25% of the participants were tabulated and used to make a College of Liberal Arts consensus map found in Appendix G. Paired-construct relationships that had a frequency of at least three or more were used on the consensus map (identified as the numbers next to the arrow heads). This shows how one idea leads to another and can help guide strategic decisions about metaphors related to CLA. The consensus map also shows the central constructs, or those words which were used to identify the paired-constructs. The central constructs are originating points and are shown on the map in colored ovals. The lines show connector constructs “serve as transmitters or linkages between originator, destination and other connector constructs” (Zaltman & Coulter, 1995, p. 45). Each link has an interpretation and can be regarded as a strategic choice opportunity for CLA to use to convey a brand message appealing to the current CLA student population or help determine key themes to use.

Methodology: Secondary Quantitative Research

Online Survey

The initial survey design was based on the results from the focus group and the interpretations of the ZMET consensus map. The goal was to collect more in-depth perceptions and attitudes from a wider, more diverse sample of CLA student participants.

After the focus group was conducted and the results analyzed and the ZMET in-depth interviews were conducted, coded and consensus map created, the interpretations and analysis were used to identify and determine the questions for the survey. The results from the focus group identified the themes of personal growth, college reputation, helpful college, the college has value and academics. The ZMET consensus map identified the central constructs of people, college, students, CLA and best and key themes of differentness, student groups, and friends. The questions were inclusive of themes from the ZMET consensus map and from the focus group and started with a couple of questions related to majors and learning followed by questions related to engagement, connecting and decision-making. Specific student engagement behaviors were next and the survey finished with demographic data. A web-based, descriptive-type survey was developed using the University of Minnesota Qualtrics site. This development system was chosen for its strong analytical capabilities and ease of use.

The survey questions were formulated to gauge more specific perceptions and attitudes related to undergraduate student experiences in CLA. The survey included a brief, neutral introduction that outlined the purpose of the survey, along with fairly self-explanatory instructions. The closed-ended questions were limited to two forms: multiple choice on a five point Likert scale and rank ordering. The questions used language that had been used by students in the focus groups and the in-depth interviews. The questions were laid out in a clear way in five sections: (1) Engagement (list of engagement activities) , (2) Connecting, (3) Decision-making, (4) Your Engagement (engagement activities that the student had actually participated in) and (5) Demographics. Easier

questions were at the beginning with slightly more difficult questions following and demographic questions at the end. The survey had 29 questions total, 24 questions related to CLA experiences and 5 demographic questions. The survey questions can be found in Appendix H.

For the sake of cost and time, an online survey was chosen and distributed via email. A pilot survey was emailed to a small group of non CLA undergraduate students to review the wording and survey flow, to check the completion time, and to test for any glitches with survey development. A few changes were made in the wording as well as adding an *other* choice under gender, and a couple development corrections were made. The total length of time to take the survey was about 10 minutes. After final changes were made, a survey link was generated and emailed to a convenience sample of 186 participants. The sample population was defined as undergraduate CLA students who had completed at minimum one full semester of classes in CLA. Participants were told in the email that the survey was anonymous. The survey was open for a total of fourteen days from Monday, June 16th, the start of the University's summer session classes, to Sunday, June 29th.

Results/Findings

Focus Group

Following are the top five theme results and the key insights from the focus group (coding results can be found in Appendix I):

Themes:

Personal Growth.

- Engagement opportunities (volunteering, internships, mentoring)
- Expanding knowledge, through academics or engagement opportunities
- Open to new experiences
- Making connections/meeting people

College Reputation.

- CLA has a good reputation with those who know it - exploration is seen as a positive, it's seen as an inclusive college and a helpful college
- CLA is “looked down upon” from those in other colleges
- There's a lack of awareness along with a sense that CLA is a place to start off

Helpful College.

- Receiving peer mentoring from older students to younger students
- Support from staff (e.g. college advisers and career counselors, but not professors)

The College has Value.

- Engagement experiences are very valuable and perceived as plentiful in CLA and a key to making one more marketable for a job
- Students find meaning in their academic experiences finding a “deeper knowledge”
- Being a mentor in the realm of personal growth is valued very highly

Academics.

- Wide range and variety of classes supports diversity of thought
- Strong core classes with an interdisciplinary feel
- The emphasis on majors in CLA is key to how it's perceived

Focus group insights included:

- Personal growth through engagement opportunities is seen as a means to holistic development for future career enjoyment.
- While concerns about jobs didn't rank in the top five, it was number seven with five percent of the overall comments connected to themes. Most often students expressed that being in CLA made them feel ready for their future career by giving them an edge. This was due to the opportunities for engagement outside the classroom and the time they had to pursue such opportunities. (The top five concerns were, in order from one to five: personal growth, college reputation, finding help when it's needed, college value, and academics.)
- The college allows for students to be creative by offering them choice in classes and majors and time to implement their decisions.

In-depth ZMET Interviews

ZMET Coding Interpretations.

Five central constructs that emerged from the coding were people, college, students, CLA and best (see Figure 1). These constructs were central to the participants' perceptions about CLA. *People* had the most paired-constructs with a total of 12. 10 of the constructs were extending out from *people*, with only 2, the constructs of *college* and *students*, coming to *people*. Central construct extensions were determined by where in the sentence the words were said by the participant. For example, if the word *different* came after the word *people* in the participant's sentence it's considered an extension from *people* to *different*. The next central construct with the most paired-constructs was *college*, with 9. Here only 1 construct, that of *students*, came to *college*, while the other 8 all extended out. Both *students* and *CLA* had 6 constructs. All constructs from *students* extended out and *CLA* had 4 constructs going out and 2 in. Finally, the central construct of *best* with only 1 construct extending out. While the word *best* did not show up in single word construct coding, it became a central construct because it had 4 total construct-pairings and could not be linked back to any of the other central constructs.

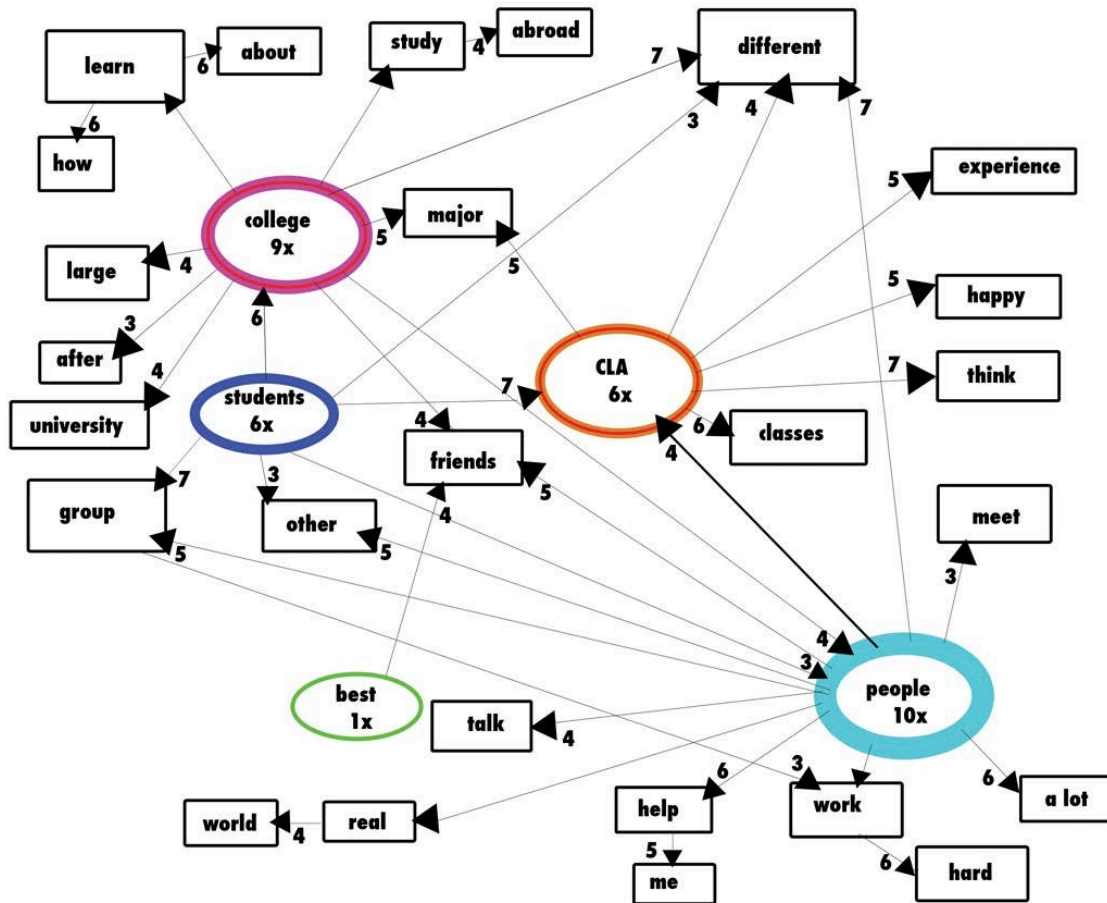


Figure 1. ZMET Consensus Map. The colored circles represent the central constructs, the arrows identify which order the word constructs were spoken and the numbers represent the total number of times the construct was spoken by the participants. The consensus map shows the word constructs related to CLA metaphors from the in-depth interviews.

Consensus map themes and interpretations included:

1. The central construct of *people* linked to *different*, *meet*, *a lot*, *hard (to work)*, *help (to me)*, *real (to world)*, *talk*, *group (to work)*, *other*, and *friend*. The greatest number of paired constructs was between *people* and *different*. *Different* manifested in terms of

college, students, CLA, and people. The next greatest constructs were with *a lot, hard working* and *help me*. Those were some of the strongest links to *people* with 6 out of 12 participants reporting. *People* was also linked to *talk, meet, and real world*. So, it can be interpreted that while CLA has a lot of different people who work and take classes there, they are all hard-working and helpful, specifically as interpreted by the student participant. *People* was also linked to *friends, other students and groups*. It was interesting that the word *people* was used by the participants, since it's a much more generic term than a specific person or a person's title or a specific group of people. It seems that the overall sense is that no matter who the person in CLA they are perceived to have these connections, creating a large web of support for students. Using the word *people* could also be a way for student participants to identify themselves in the mix of these constructs. The paired constructs of *people meet* and *people talk* are also very active and external to the participant. So it could be interpreted that CLA is a challenging place for students who are more introverted.

2. The central construct of *college* linked to *learn (to about and how), study (to abroad), different, major, people (to different, meet, a lot, hard to work, help to me, real to world, talk, group, other, friends), friends, university, after, and large*. Students is the only paired-construct that comes in to *college*. Here the greatest links were to the construct *different* where participants were identifying the college as different (especially when compared to the other colleges), *major* (interesting to focus on major and not job or future career), and then *people, friends, university* and *large*. To a lesser extent *college*

was linked with *after*, in terms of what participants saw as their post undergraduate plans. Again, participants see CLA as a college that's different from the others and they do connect the college with their major. CLA connecting back to *people* was interesting when considering all the links out of the people construct. Again, the use of such a generic term such as college was interesting and showcases the current lack of participant connection directly with the College of Liberal Arts. The link from *college* to the construct of *learn* was not strong in the initial paired-construct coding, but the paired construct coding from *learn* to *about* and *how* were very strong with at least half of the participants used this paired construct as such. The central construct of *college* was the strongest of all of the central constructs to link to *learn*. Participants identify strongly and equally with learning about and learning how. This ties directly to a CLA core value of teaching students the value of learning to learn...not just learning about, but learning how as well.

3. The central construct of *students* linked out to the top constructs of *CLA*, *group* (to *people* and *work*), and *college* with *different*, *people*, and *other* linked, but not quite as strongly. Participants identify students as being in CLA, mostly because it's the largest college. So when participants talked about pictures with university students in them, they articulated that most of the students in the picture were probably CLA students, even if they didn't know the students in the picture or it was a picture with particularly large numbers of students on campus. The construct of *students* linked to *group* was significantly strong with 7 out of 12 participants linking to it. In CLA, participants

reported student groups as a great way to gain personal growth, gain experiences outside the classroom, and build a resume. The construct of *group* linked to *work* highlights the reports by participants of high levels of group work in CLA classes. The construct of *students* linked to *college* and then back out to *learn*, *study*, *different*, *major*, *people*, *friends*, *university*, *after*, and *large* showed the fairly obvious links, but shows which are stronger links than others. For example, students linked to college linked to different is very strong with half and more than half of participants linking these constructs together versus students linked to college with a very weak link to study abroad. Again, participants reported that CLA students are different than other students at the University with a direct link between the constructs of students and different. There were also links to people and all its paired construct links and other.

4. The central construct of *CLA* was linked to *think* as its top construct, with more than half of the participants reporting that link. The next highest link was to *classes* with half the participants pairing those two constructs. Three other strong paired constructs were to *major*, *experience*, and *happy*. While the link to the construct of *different* was the lowest, it was still reported by 4 out of 12 participants. There were two links in to *CLA* from the *student* and *people* central constructs. The paired constructs here seem to suggest that CLA is strongly associated with thinking and classes. It also should be noted that there are the direct links to *major*, which is also linked from *college*, *experience* and *happy*. While participants talked about the importance of experiences outside the classroom,

from this central construct it seems that they are also focused on classes and thinking and CLA overall makes them happy.

5. The central construct of *best* links to *friend*, which is pretty self explanatory in terms of interpretation. While there is only one construct here it had 33% or 4 out of 12 of the participants connecting with it. It should be noted that friends also has connections from *people* and *college*. It can be interpreted to as the high, personable quality of relationships that participants reported finding in college.

The interpretations of metaphors by way of the mental constructs from the ZMET consensus map have powerful implications for helping to identify differentiation for a CLA brand that, according to Zaltman and Coulter “at some level, their meaning is shared within a culture or community” (2007, p. 39). Thus, the greater CLA student community could resonate with branding derived from the ZMET consensus map. The ZMET consensus map could also be used in conjunction with the competitive analysis and a strategy canvas to help identify unique strategic factors, which would then guide the differential target analysis, brand genesis, messaging architecture, process of identifying priority drivers in a campaign driver analysis, and possibly even the process of identifying which communication channels to use. The strongest key theme and perhaps a key insight into the brand of CLA was the link from 4 of the 5 central constructs to the construct pairing of different. The questions that arose from this construct link were, do the majority of students see CLA as different from other colleges? and how does that difference manifest for CLA students? Two other fairly strong key

themes are friends (linked to from people, college and best) and group (linked to from people and students).

While the ZMET identified some profound metaphoric themes based on the word constructs such as CLA being different in comparison to other colleges and participants identifying their best friend with college and some connections that align directly with the College of Liberal Arts values and goals, like thinking and learning, there were some other metaphors with word constructs that, while not strong enough to be directly identified on the ZMET consensus map, could be insights into CLA and were derived from the ZMET process. One such metaphor was that of participants connecting their college experience with being in the ocean and that CLA is like the boat. The participant reported being the one to steer the boat and can go anywhere with the security of being in the boat. Another insight was that for current college students, they value their friends' influence more than family influence, which is important to note because current students could become CLA brand ambassadors. Another insight, the words discover or discovery didn't show up once in the 15,197 words reviewed. This is significant because *Driven to Discover* is the University of Minnesota's *brand message* and the message that the Office of Admissions has defaulted to using for CLA. CLA, with no strategic communication plan of its own has, by association, adopted it as their message too.

While the College of Liberal arts may be attacked by some as not a good value for the price, participants in the ZMET reported getting a lot out of their college experiences and were able to articulate through metaphor some of CLA's fundamental value. Overall, participants were able to identify the broader CLA values of an "education to engage

breadth and depth of knowledge” while they also reported appreciating their engagement experiences as much as their majors and academics and being committed to “services and leadership” as they embrace being part of something different, forge life-long friendships, and participate in student groups. Values specifically linked to the uniqueness of CLA from the students’ perspective, are missing from the Office of Admissions messaging and are very much missing from the CLA messaging. As current students, these participants resonated with a few constructs of the CLA value proposition statement as written on the Office of Admissions website and reiterated on the CLA website. These constructs were “the 60 majors” and “study,” but the other words in the statement “social sciences, arts, and humanities” did not show up at all. Neither did the words “departments,” “rank,” “nation,” “international,” “renowned,” “faculty,” “community,” “world,” “languages” and “cultures” (Office of Admissions Office of Undergraduate Education, 2010). While the words *community* and *world* were frequently used by ZMET participants, they were not used frequently enough to appear in the single word coding or in the paired-construct coding.

Despite all the positive constructs in the ZMET, there was a negative reputation associated with CLA reported by participants that they don’t share, but identified that other students in CLA and students from other colleges at the University do. So, despite all of its positives, it’s clear that the current CLA brand messaging as promoted by the Office of Admissions is not resonating with students external or even some students internal to CLA. Currently, there doesn’t appear to be strong alignment with the University’s brand at all for CLA students.

In line with the Social Exchange Theory, students are looking for a value, in the sense of paying for the experience and education that will lead to a job. If the price of a college education outweighs the perceived value outcome, then students will leave. At this time, some students do see the value of a liberal arts education, but not all do. Therefore, the college needs to do a better job of identifying students' positive impressions of the college and using those impressions to create symbols, images, communication messages that convey the brand meaning.

It seems that overall, current students in CLA have strong impressions, some of which align with the goals and values of the college. For example, one focus group participant was quoted as saying, "...last year I was talking a lot about colonization in my American Literatures class and my Spanish cultures class, so I'm able to grab something from one class and bring it up in another class." Another said, "throughout different departments all of my classes always had something that was related to another class and then I think the good think about being part of a core and then having that broader perspective..." This impression is in direct alignment with the interdisciplinary structure of CLA and the promotion of learning that transcends learning facts, methods, and theories to how classroom topics are interwoven with each other. However, some students reported in the focus group that CLA, "...it had like a bad rep[utation] with the people I was talking to..." Even though college is a great expense, students in the focus group reported that they believe in the academic experience in CLA and also the importance of personal growth opportunities outside of the classroom through student groups and study abroad. All of these experiences shape an accomplished student and

prepare them for a competitive work place. It seems that the size of the college, the relationships with people, the help, the opportunities through different classes, majors, and student groups really make for a happy student in CLA (as can be interpreted from the link on the ZMET consensus map). This entire service package seems to be viewed by the majority of students as a great value and ultimately helps them feel that both the financial cost and the symbolic cost is worth it. Therefore, using this early research it seems that current CLA students would be not only have an image of CLA as a brand, but would be able to articulate a brand identity for the college, and could also act as brand ambassadors for the college.

Online Survey

The result was a total of 30 participants who completed the survey out of 186 invited to participate via email a 16% completion rate. Of the 30 surveys, 100% were fully completed. A majority of the respondents were female (63%, N=19), which is fairly representative of the CLA statistics for gender breakdown. Of those who responded, there were no freshman (first year) participants, 5 sophomores (second year), 13 juniors (third year), 9 seniors (fourth year) and 1 super senior (fifth year). 80% of the respondents reported their ethnicity as white, 10% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 3% Black/African American. Majors reported were in the social sciences (33%, N=10), psychological sciences (17%, N=5), languages (10%, N=3), communications and media (10%, N=3), double majors (10%, N=3), Bachelors of Individualized Studies (10%, 3), Undecided

(10%, N=3), and health and natural sciences (.3%, N=1). The area of mathematics was not represented.

The overall survey results were linked back to engagement opportunities and helpfulness, as reported in both the focus group and in the ZMET consensus map as key insights, people and differentness, as identified as a key construct in the ZMET consensus map, and value from the focus group. Detailed survey graphs can be found in Appendix J.

Engagement Opportunities.

The results related to *engagement* showed that 73% (N=22) of respondents reported that engagement opportunities outside the classroom were important to them, but only 40% (N=12) reported they were aware of CLA engagement activities (see Figure 2). Parents were the least helpful source for getting information from about engagement opportunities, while 66% (N=20) of participants responded that friends were the most helpful source with CLA staff in second at 57% (N=17), faculty third at 50% (N=15). The largest number of respondents reported participating in engagement opportunities outside the classroom at least 1-2 times per week (40%, N=12). Second was 3-4 times per week (17%, N=5) and only 10% (N=3) reported never participating in engagement opportunities outside the classroom.

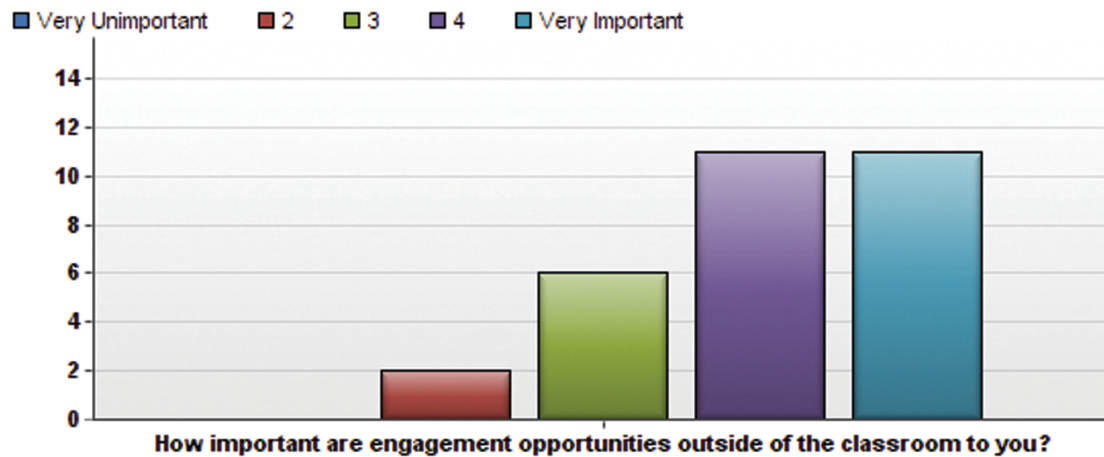


Figure 2. Graph of engagement opportunities. Each bar represents responses from the left, very unimportant to right, very important. Responses to the importance of engagement opportunities outside the classroom from the online survey.

Since personal growth was a strong theme in both the focus group and the ZMET in-depth interviews, the survey asked participants to respond to questions related to the personal value of engagement opportunities. Respondents reported that paid and unpaid internships were the most valuable, 43% (N=13) and 20% (N=6) respectively. Combined, they accounted for 63% of the responses for how valuable each engagement opportunity was out of the list of 7 options. Next was participating in non-CLA centric student groups, a response that had been part of the ZMET construct as student groups, which was reported at 10% (N=3) of the total and second to internships. Mentoring was tied at third, along with volunteering and being mentored at 6% (N=2).

Participants reported that the most valuable engagement opportunities, of paid internships, would also be the more likely for them to participate in, but it was one of the

lowest reported of actual participation at 27% (N=8). An unpaid internship was valued by 20% (N=6), but only 10% (N=3) responded that they would be most likely participate in them, but yet 37% (N=11) and 30% (N=9), respectively said they have actually participated or would like to participate. The second largest response to “would like to participate” tied with mentoring and being mentored at 40% (N=12), while only .6% (N=2) respondents find these the most valuable. However, 63% (N=19) of respondents said that mentoring is important and 37% (N=11) said that being mentored is important. (See Table 1.)

Table 1**Reported Participant Engagement**

Engagement Opportunities	Importance	Most Valuable	Most Likely to Participate	Actually Participated	Would Like to Participate
Volunteering	NA	0.6%	17%	NA	NA
Paid Internship	NA	43%	40%	27%	53%
Unpaid Internship	NA	20%	10%	37%	30%
Mentoring	63%	0.6%	17%	40%	40%
Being Mentored	37%	0.6%	0%	23%	40%
CLA Student Group	NA	0.3%	0.6%	50%	20%
Non-CLA Student Group	NA	10%	0.6%	70%	10%

People.

One of the central constructs from the ZMET consensus map was *people* linked to both different and meet. The survey supported this with 90% (N=27) of respondents reported the importance of making connections/meeting people and they also responded very positively understanding the connection of meeting new people to a variety of different engagement opportunities like mentoring (83%, N=25), as well as new experiences (90%, N=27) and future job opportunities (90%, N=27). Participants responded at or near 50% (N=15) that each of the different categories of people, faculty, students, staff were helpful in fostering new friendships, mentoring opportunities, new experiences, and future job opportunities (see Figure 3). The importance of meeting people was connected to diverse faculty, students, and staff.

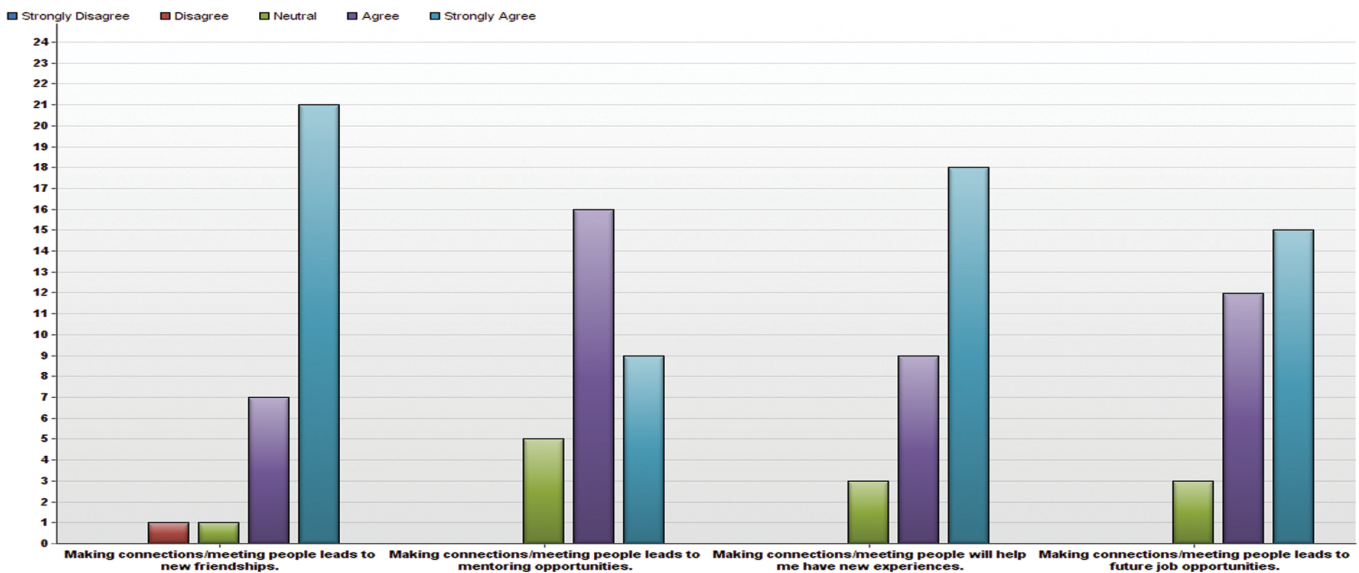


Figure 3. Graph of connections to people in CLA. Each bar represents responses from the left, strongly disagree to the right, strongly agree. Responses related to connections and meeting people from the online survey.

Differentness.

The central construct of *people* from the ZMET consensus map linked to *different* and was supported by the survey with at or near 50% (N=15) of the respondents reporting that CLA was different because of the diverse faculty, students, staff. Respondents also reported in high percentages that CLA was different because of the variety of majors (63%, N=19), the ability to get help when it's needed (53%, N=16), being able to choose classes (70%, N=21), because of its size (77%, N=23) and learning to think critically (57%, N=17).

Helpfulness.

The survey asked questions about *helpfulness* related specifically to engagement opportunities. Participants' friends were reported as the most helpful at 66% (N=20), followed by CLA Staff at 57% (N=17), and faculty at 50% (N=15). Parents were reported as not helpful by 50% (N=15) of the respondents. Respondents identified departmental advisers (83%, N=25) as the most helpful in general, with friends a very close second (80%, N=24). In terms of helping with decision-making, however, parents and friends tied at 23% (N=7) of respondents saying that they were important in the decision-making

process. While faculty, other CLA staff and other family members were reported at least important with 27% (N=8).

Another ZMET consensus map construct and a focus group theme was the helpfulness of the college. The survey showed 40% (N=12) of respondents reported that CLA overall was helping them be prepared for the workforce after graduation, while 50% was on the fence. However, 53% (N=16) reported being able to get help when they needed it and that made CLA different.

Value.

The central construct of CLA on the ZMET consensus map had a link to *major* and major also came up in the focus group in relation to the choices that participants can make. The survey showed that 73% (N=22) of respondents reported majors as either important or very important. When majors were cross tabulated with variety, there was also a 73% (N=22) response rate showing that not only is the major important, but the variety of majors is important as well. Participants reported that the most valuable engagement opportunities of paid internship, would also be the more likely to participate in, but it was one of the lowest reported of actual participation at 27% (N=8).

There were 30% (N=9) of respondents who reported that the overall financial value of CLA was good or very good value, with 50% (N=15) in the middle, and 20% (N=6) reported the value as bad or very bad. The cross tabulation of respondents overall who reported that they “liked” or “loved” CLA and thought it was a good financial value was at 23% (N=7). Personal value was much higher with 63% (N=19) of respondents

reporting it good or very good, 30% (N=9) reported it in the middle and only .6% (N=2) reported it bad there. None of the respondents reported the personal value as very bad.

The gender demographic cross tabulation with financial (see Figure 4) and personal value (see Figure 5) showed 17%(N=5) of female respondents reported the financial value as good or very good, while male respondents reported a bit higher with 17% (N=5) at good or very good. Both female and male respondents identified personal value much higher in relation to financial value. Female respondents reported much higher with 40% (N=12) good or very good personal value, while male respondents reported in a bit lower at 20% (N=6). No male respondents reported a bad or very bad personal value, while females reported a bad personal value at .6%(N=2). Female respondents also reported much higher in terms of the cross tabulation of gender demographic and how well CLA is liked at 50% (N=15), while male respondents only reported liking or loving CLA at 23% (N=7).

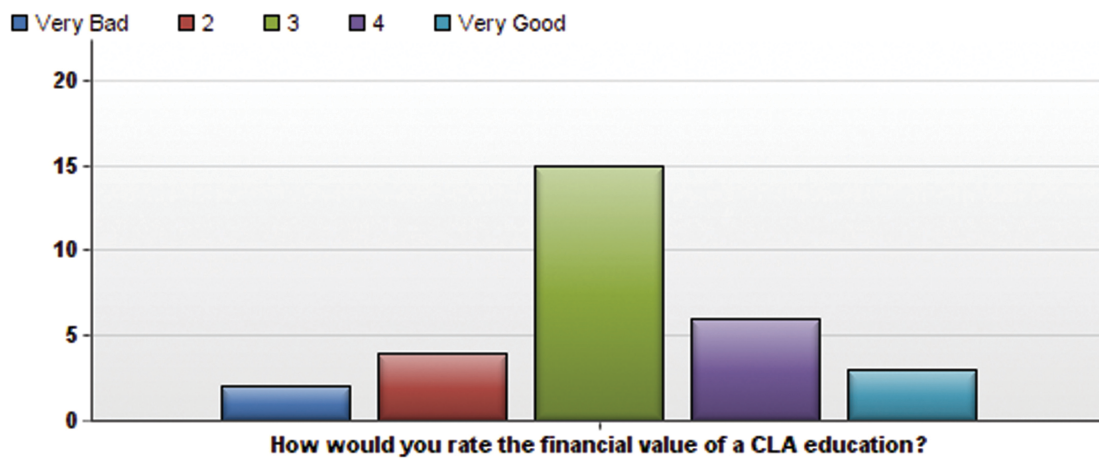


Figure 4. Graph of the financial value of a CLA education. Each bar represents responses

from the left, very bad to the right, very good. The graphs rates the financial value of a CLA education from the online survey.

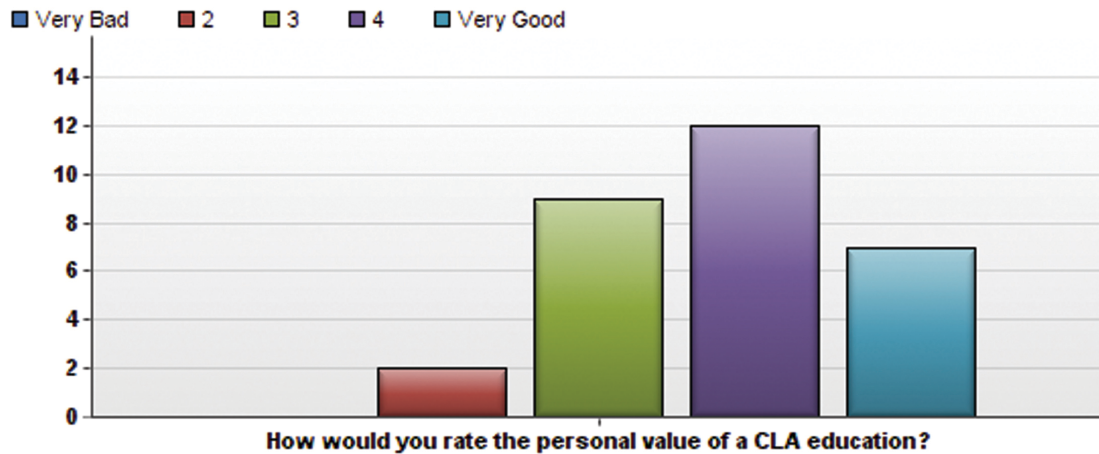


Figure 5. Graph of the personal value of a CLA education. Each bar represents responses from the left, very bad to the right, very good. The graphs rates the personal value of a CLA education from the online survey.

Limitations

There were a limitations with the focus group as it wasn't completely representative of CLA demographics nor was it representative of the size of the college. Additionally, the convenience sampling from such a large college doesn't allow for a fair representation of the size or the variety of perceptions about the college of the student body. Due to the limitations of sample size for such a large undergraduate student population in CLA and the convenience sample population, the data from the research in this paper isn't a large enough sample of CLA student perceptions to be incorporated in a

brand promise for CLA. This paper does outline the methodology of how to collect student perceptions, which, if conducted on a large scale research project, could be used to ascertain a representative sample offering more complete data about student perceptions to be used in a brand promise.

Other limitations from the research included no male students in the focus group. While CLA is made up of a higher percentage of female students, men do attend CLA and their participation would be needed to have a fair representation of the college. The limitation of bias on behalf of the moderator should be taken into account. There were a couple limitations with the ZMET, while the group of participants was a fairly representative group in terms of gender, race, and year in school compared to the college, it would be important to include a more random sample of students from across the academic standing spectrum, as most of these students were fairly highly involved students. The limitation of bias on behalf of the interviewer should be taken into account. The online survey had the limitation of being a small convenience sample that wasn't representative of such a large student body. Since CLA has a policy that does not allow individual surveys to be mass emailed to the entire student body, this is a challenging limitation whereby a snowball sample could also be difficult due to the sheer size of the college. Similar to the focus group, the online survey had the limitation of the convenience sample of not having the widest variety of perspectives about CLA represented. Another limitation for the survey was that it was distributed after spring semester was over, so there were fewer students engaged in their college experience,

yielding fewer respondents than if the students were on campus and engaged in fall or spring semester.

Discussion

As consumers of the college experience and the College of Liberal Arts being the largest college at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities Campus, the purpose of this paper was to identify **what student perceptions could be used in a brand promise to help the College of Liberal Arts better differentiate itself among other University of Minnesota and Minnesota colleges** in order to retain a larger overall percentage of CLA centric students. The paper focused on the undergraduate student population and their perceptions, since they represent the largest number of students and have the greatest capacity to help create a dynamic brand value promise for the college. Differentiating factors as identified from the research of CLA undergraduate students is important because, as the literature says, organizational actions should reflect stakeholder values based on the interrelationship between the two. So, as consumers of the college experience, and therefore a stakeholder, undergraduate CLA student perceptions are important to creating a brand value message that differentiates as well as resonates with them, yielding the potential for brand ambassadorship.

Based on the online survey findings, CLA seems to be less of the reason why students choose the University with only 23% (N=7) of students reporting that it was important or very important reason for deciding to attend the University. The reputation did seem to affect recommendations a bit more with 37% (N=11) reporting that

reputation would affect a recommendation to a friend or family member. So there is space here to shift the message and the perception.

The themes and constructs that emerged from the focus group and the ZMET consensus map findings were further investigated to a more specific level with the survey which showed that CLA undergraduate students had some very strong perceptions about the college, some of which were identified through metaphor elicitation and seem to be linked more strongly with the college experience than any of the current messaging. For example, CLA having helpful people who include more specifically CLA undergraduate students' friends, CLA staff, and CLA faculty. As one focus group participant stated, "In general, it's a very helping community and it leaves me with a sense that CLA is judged pretty harshly—being in it though, I feel like we have so many resources and our success rate is probably so much better because we help students instead of throwing tests at them." Student engagement, and specifically internships (both paid and unpaid) were reported as top and could be related back to the personal growth theme from the focus group.

Findings showed that CLA is seen as more of a personal value than a financial value for respondents, especially when considering the positive results from the engagement opportunities that respondents identified. In the focus group, participants reported that CLA was different from other colleges because students had time to participate in engagement opportunities outside the classroom, which they reported added to their personal growth. A focus group respondent said about CLA that, "...there's so much room outside of that to be more flexible and to experience a lot of different

programs or different course in different departments...” in relation to those opportunities outside of the specified major in CLA. In response to the question, “What kinds of things has the College of Liberal Arts offered you since you’ve been here?” another focus group participant said, “Different networking opportunities, both through my department and CLA.” This was reflected in the positive responses for personal value. However, the responses to the financial value of CLA were low. So, taking into account the Social Exchange Theory, the symbolic, or personal, value is high, but the economic, or financial, value is very low. Based on the Social Exchange Theory and the Elaboration Likelihood Model, using the specific themes and constructs derived from the research where metaphor elicitation was conducted, could really make a difference in increasing the financial value for students. Students who elaborate on a brand value statement in line with the value of their own experience, in this case it might be help from the college or personal growth, could therefore more readily realize the financial value associated with the experience they are paying for. This may also have the side effect of increasing the personal value. By using more specific categories of “people” (as referenced in the ZMET consensus map) that undergraduate CLA students value, (namely friends, CLA staff and departmental advisers), when the college messages about engagement opportunities, meeting new people, having new experiences, future job opportunities, etc. it could help elicit more elaboration from them. Using words and images that reflect these student-driven perceptions could create a greater resonance with the college from the students and ultimately lead to more brand value.

The research showed that CLA undergraduate students do resonate with a couple aspects of the current CLA value proposition, which includes the large number of majors and the mention of faculty. One respondent from the focus group said, “The opportunity to study multiple things and clearly define my interests, but enabled me to have multiple...so academically it allowed me to have multiple interests prepare me for a variety of careers.” However, participants seemed to respond with practical aspects of what faculty could help them with (for example, finding engagement opportunities), rather than any evoking any concepts or metaphors relating to their prestige. Overall, the research findings taken into account with the literature, supports that CLA undergraduate students have perceptions that could help differentiate the College of Liberal Arts and possibly make a positive impact on non-CLA centric students in CLA. While it has been acknowledged that the data used in this paper was derived from a small undergraduate student population, their perceptions are still valid and show that students do have internalized messages about CLA as part of their student experiences in CLA. A study with a larger sample size, more representative of the number of undergraduate students attending CLA, could yield more data and more accurate perceptions of the brand. These perceptions could guide newly formed brand promise and messaging, which has the possibility of strengthening both the symbolic and the economic value for the college, and could ultimately lead to a potential increase in overall brand value.

Recommendations and Future Research

This paper shows some evidence that 1) current CLA undergraduate students do not identify with the minimal brand statements currently in use and 2) the current CLA undergraduate students sampled have strong perceptions of metaphors that they do resonate with and a larger sample size could be leveraged for more student perceptions to create a dynamic, authentic brand value messaging for CLA. Student participants in the research reported that CLA was different, so there is a recognition that CLA is different and further research to expand on differences and how much value diversity is valued should be done. However in this research, the general perception of difference was identified in the size of the college that could offer truly diverse faculty, students, and staff, be helpful (despite its size), offer a large variety of majors (that no other college can offer), allow students to choose classes (not have classes pre-selected, as in other colleges), identify as the largest college in the state of Minnesota, and drive students to learn to think critically. CLA could begin considering any one of these perceptions in future research into for future branding efforts.

In addition to the diversity of faculty, students, and staff in this early research, CLA people were perceived by participants to be helpful with finding engagement opportunities, specifically: participants' friends, CLA staff, CLA faculty. In regard to more general helpfulness, CLA departmental advisers were mentioned, which CLA should consider highlighting. A future research opportunity here would be to find more specifically how they are helpful, through what means are they helpful and are there other topics where they are helpful. It might also be good to research if undergraduate CLA students find their CLA advising team a differentiating factor, versus how students in

other colleges consider their advising team, especially since classes in other colleges are pre-selected leaving little opportunity for student choice.

Based on this early research, engagement opportunities outside the classroom could be a great differentiating factor to use in brand value messaging and one that students could also emphasize as brand ambassadors by promoting the different engagement opportunities that they have experienced. Engagement opportunities outside the classroom was a persistent perception by participants about CLA in this early research. This is potentially unique to CLA and a solid differentiating factor, since participants cited that students in the other colleges do not have time to participate in engagement opportunities outside the classroom. The research showed that students are participating in engagement opportunities at fairly high rates with 57% of respondents reporting that they are participating 1-4 times per week. CLA could capitalize on this participatory energy and find out more specifically what students are participating in to leverage it in branding efforts, especially if the opportunities are very specific to CLA.

This early research also showed that students in these studies are participating in opportunities that they do not necessarily value, but think are important for one reason or another. This would be another good subject for future research to find out why students are participating if they do not find value in it. Future research could also lead to CLA doing a better job at making more valued engagement opportunities available for students, like internships, thus increasing the value of being a student in CLA. Survey respondents also reported that they were participating in non-CLA student groups, which

could be researched to discover if this allows students to become more “well-rounded” or workforce ready.

The variety of majors in CLA was another strong perception held by participants with 73% reporting it to be either important or very important on the survey. While the current brand statement identifies that there are 60 CLA majors, CLA could do a better job of describing majors, highlighting the student choice factor in relation to majors (which was identified as a positive in the focus group), and connecting both the variety of majors and the engagement opportunities to workforce readiness, long-term workforce prosperity, and happiness. Since the major so closely ties in with the college and learning on the ZMET consensus map, CLA could also do further research related to the constructs of *learning about* and *learning how* as they are so closely aligned with CLA core values, to find out more specifically what students like to learn about and how they like to learn. There is potential for these to be signature differentiating factors.

Future research should include focus groups with a better representation of males and a diverse population of students in terms of academic standing and involvement levels in order to get more a representative student population sample of the college. In addition to CLA centric students who participated in this research, it would be helpful to survey and/or interview a representative sample population of the 40% non-CLA centric students for deeper insights as to their non-CLA centric perspective. While CLA has a good reputation with those students who know it, where exploration and choice are seen as positive and it’s viewed as an inclusive and helpful college, participants in the focus group identified CLA as being “looked down upon” by students in other colleges and

they reported a lack of awareness about CLA as just being a place to “start off.” So, it would also be helpful to interview and/or survey students from the other colleges about their perceptions of CLA in order to better understand this perceived stigma. It could also be insightful to capture some of the perceptions from recent CLA alumni in order to identify what CLA alumni retain in their memories and how that can be leveraged for CLA branding strength.

Many possible recommendations and areas to conduct future research have been outlined in this paper. Next steps for CLA would be to determine branding goals, develop a brand promise and key messaging. In order to do this, CLA will need to put together a strategic communication plan, which should include:

1. An audit of how CLA performs against the factors of competition.
2. Identify a brand target or segment, for example current non-CLA centric students.
3. Identify current brand performance in relation to the brand target.
4. Develop positioning statements and desired response selection.
5. Develop brand promise, messaging.
6. Identify and prioritize messaging channels.
7. Identify and complete measurement of impact on retention of newly implemented brand campaign.

Following this paper, CLA should invest in a large-scale survey to research a more representative undergraduate student population about their perceptions concerning the CLA brand. The key to further research for CLA is identifying the positive student perceptions about the college and capitalizing on them by incorporating them into a brand

promise that will help elicit more elaboration in thinking by students, staff, faculty and parents alike, which can enhance the value of the college experience. Then develop the brand promise and communication efforts using a two-way communication model so CLA can incorporate these perceptions and collect feedback from their messaging efforts.

Since 40% of the female respondents from the survey reported CLA as a good or very good personal value, CLA should consider asking female students to become brand ambassadors to help with the messaging of the brand value messaging, as they have such high personal value associated with the college. A quote from the focus group highlights this well, “I think throughout my time being here I’ve grown as a defender of the liberal arts...” Another recommendation would be to complete follow-up in-depth ZMET interviews after the first year of new branding efforts to identify metaphor shifts as well as a follow-up survey to see if participants use language more specifically related to CLA brand messaging. These follow-up measurements could help identify if the brand promise been internalized by students. “The ultimate goal of the institution is to deliver what the brand promises” as represented by Sevier (as cited in Rodgers & Jackson, 2012, p. 154). “If this occurs, the result is a level of loyalty which benefits all; and the power of the brand promise will keep the customer engaged with the institution” as indicated by Wheatly (as cited in Rodgers & Jackson, 2012, p. 154). CLA should consider using this paper with its research, recommendations, opportunities for future research to create more resonate, dynamic brand promise to message to current CLA undergraduate students.

References

- Abratt, R. (1989). A New Approach to the Corporate Image Management Process. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 5 (1): 63-76.
- Bagozzi, R., Gopinath, M., & Nyer, P. (1999). The Role of Emotions in Marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 27 (2): 184-206.
- Benett, A. (2014). *In Defense Of A Liberal Arts Degree*. Retrieved from <http://www.fastcompany.com/3028811/in-defense-of-a-liberal-arts-degree>
- Bhattacharya, C. B., & Sen, S. (2003). Consumer-company identification: a framework for understanding consumers' relationships with companies. *Journal of Marketing*, 67 (2): 76-89.
- Bowden, J. (2011). Engaging The Student As A Customer: A Relationship Marketing Approach. *Marketing Education Review*, 21 (3): 211-228.
- Brexendorf, T., & Kernstock, J. (2007). Corporate behavior vs. brand behavior: Towards an integrated view? *Brand Management*, 15 (1): 32-40.
- Brickson, S. L. (2007). Organizational Identity Orientation: The Genesis of the Role of

- the Firm and Distinct Forms of Social Value. *The Academy of management Review*, 32 (3): 864-888.
- Chapleo, C. (2005). Do Universities Have “Successful” Brands? *International Journal of Educational Advancement*, 6 (1): 54-64).
- Christensen, G., & Olson, J. (2002). Mapping Consumers’ Mental Models with ZMET. *Psychology & Marketing*, 19 (6): 477-502.
- Cornelissen, J., Haslam, S., Balmer, J. (2007). Social Identity, Organizational Identity and Corporate Identity: Towards an Integrated Understanding of Process, Patternings and Products.
- Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. (2005). *Social Exchange Theory: An Interdisciplinary Review*. *Journal of Management*, 31 (6): 874-900.
- Discover CLA. (2012). About CLA. Retrieved from <http://discovercla.umn.edu/claprofile.php>
- Discover CLA. (2012). *Why liberal arts?* Retrieved from <http://discovercla.umn.edu/liberalarts.php>

- Delucchi, M., & Korgen, K. (2002). "We're The Customer—We Pay The Tuition": Student Consumerism Among Undergraduate Sociology Majors. *Teaching Sociology*, 30 (1): 100-107.
- Duncan, T., & Moriarty, S. (1998). A Communication-Based Marketing Model for Managing Relationships. *Journal of Marketing*, 62 (2): 1-13.
- Durkin, M., McKenna, S., & Cummins, D. (2012). Emotional connections in higher education marketing. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 26 (2): 153-161.
- Dutton, J., Dukerich, J., & Harquail, C. (1994). Organizational Images and Member Identification. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 39 (2): 239-263.
- Emerson, R. (1976). Social Exchange Theory. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2: 335-362.
- Gengler, C., & Reynold, T. (1995). Consumer Understanding and Advertising Strategy: Analysis and Strategic Translation of Laddering Data. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 35 (4): 19-34.
- Gioia, D. A., Schultz, M., & Corley, K. G. (2000). Organizational Identity, Image, and Adaptive Instability. *The Academy of Management Review*, 25 (1): 63-81.

Gioia, D., & Thomas, J. (1996). Identity, Image, and Issue Interpretation: Sensemaking During Strategic Change in Academia. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 41 (3): 370-403.

Government and Community Relations. (2012). *State Relations Updates*. Retrieved from <http://govrelations.umn.edu/state/session-updates-2009.html>

Gray, E. R., & Balmer, J. M. (1998). Managing Corporate Image and Corporate Reputation. *Long Range Planning*, 31 (5): 695-702.

Grunig, J. (1993). Image and Substance: From Symbolic to Behavioral Relationships. *Public Relations Review*, 19 (2): 121-139.

Humphreys, D., & Kelly, P. (2014). How Liberal Arts and Sciences Majors Fare in Employment: A Report on Earnings and Long-Term Career Paths. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Jaschik, S. (2014). *The STEM Enrollment Boom*. Retrieved from <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/04/07/study-finds-increased-stem-enrollment-recession#sthash.R4UFqhHY.dpbs>

Keller, K. (1993). Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57 (1): 1-22.

Keller, K. (2003). Brand Synthesis: The Multidimensionality of Brand Knowledge. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29 (4): 595-600.

LAWLOR: Intelligent Marketing Solutions for Higher Education. (2013). *Ten Higher Education Trends for 2013*. Retrieved from <http://www.thelaworgroup.com/pov/focus/1301-ten-higher-education-trends-2013>

LeBalnc, G., & Nguyen, N. (1999). Listening to the customer's voice: examining perceived service value among business college students. *The International Journal of Educational Management*, 13, (4): 187-198.

Lehmberg, S., & Pflaum, A. (2001). *The University of Minnesota 1945-2000*. Minneapolis, MN, the University of Minnesota Press.

Minnesota Office of Higher Education. (2014). *Minnesota Institutions Attended, Fall 2012* [Data file]. Retrieved from <https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=2079>.

Minnesota Office of Higher Education. (2014). *Out-of-State Institutions Attended by*

- Minnesota Residents* [Data file]. Retrieved from
<https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=2082>.
- Moore, R. (2010). The Rising Tide: “Branding” in the Academic Marketplace. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 36 (3): 56-61.
- MPR News. (2003). *University of Minnesota faces budget issues*. Retrieved from
http://www.mprnews.org/story/midday/2003/03/midday_20030310a
- MyCLA Statistics. (2014). *Enrolled CLA Students* [Data file]. Retrieved from
https://mycla.umn.edu/statistics.php?app=admissions_statistics&stataction=view_stats&stat_type=cla_students
- Ng, I., & Forbes, J. (2009). Education as Service: The Understanding of University Experience Through the Service Logic. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 19 (1): 38-64.
- Office of Admissions Office of Undergraduate Education. (2010). Colleges and Majors. Retrieved from
http://admissions.tc.umn.edu/admissioninfo/fresh_acadprog.html#cla
- One Stop Student Services (2010). Estimating your costs. Retrieved from

http://onestop.umn.edu/finances/costs_and_tuition/cost_of_attendance/index.html?year=2013-14&residency=non-resident&program=undergrad&CSOM=false

One Stop Student Services (2010). Estimating your costs. Retrieved from

https://onestop.umn.edu/finances/costs_and_tuition/cost_of_attendance/index.html?year=2013-14&residency=resident&program=undergrad&CSOM=false

Petty, R., Cacioppo, J., & Schumann, D. (1983). Central and Peripheral Routes to Advertising Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Involvement. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 10 (2): 135-146

Pricopie, R. (2007). Branding in Higher Education. *Review of Management and Economical Engineering*, 6 (6): 198-205.

Roedder, D., Loken, B., Kim, K., & Monga, A. (2006). Brand Concept Maps: A Methodology for Identifying Brand Association Networks. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 43 (4): 549-563).

Rodgers, J., & Jackson, M. (2012). Are We Who We Think We Are: Evaluating Brand Promise at a Liberal-Arts Institution. *Higher Education*, 37 (2): 153-166.

Scott, S., & Lane, V.R. (2000). A Stakeholder Approach to Organizational Identity. *The*

Academy of Management Review, 25 (1): 43-62.

Sheth, J., Sisodia, R., & Sharma, A. (2000). The Antecedents and Consequences of Customer-Centric Marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 28 (1): 55-66).

University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts. (2002). Constitution. Retrieved from <http://cla.umn.edu/intranet/deans/>

US News & World Report. (2014). *Top Public Schools National Universities*. Retrieved from <http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/rankings/nationsl-universities/top-public>

van Riel, C. B., & Balmer, J.M. (1997). Corporate identity: the concept, its measurement and management. *European Journal of Marketing*, 31 (5/6): 340-355.

Vásquez, C., Sergi, V., & Cordelier, B. (2013). From being branded to doing branding: Studying representation practices from a communication-centered approach. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 29 (2): 135-146.

Waeraas, A., & Solbakk, M. (2009). Defining the essence of a university: lessons from

- higher education branding. *Higher Education*, 57 (4): 449-462.
- Wansink, B. (2003). Using laddering to understand and leverage a brand's equity. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 6 (2): 111-118.
- Whetten, D., (2006). Albert and Whetten Revisited: Strengthening the Concept of Organizational Identity. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 15 (3): 219-234.
- Xie, C., Bagozzi, R., & Troye, S. (2008). Trying to presume: toward a theory of consumers as co-creators of value. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 36 (1): 109-122.
- Yi, H., Phelps, J., & Roskos-Ewoldsen, D. (1998). Examining the Effectiveness of Comparative Advertising: The Role of Attitude Accessibility. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 20 (1): 61-74.
- Zaltman, G. (1997). Rethinking Market Research: Putting People Back In. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34 (4): 424-437.
- Zaltman, G., & Coulter, R. (1995). Seeing The Voice Of The Customer: Metaphor-Based Advertising Research. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 35 (4): 35-51.

Appendix A –

Competitive Analysis for CLA:

	CLA	Comp-Mankato College of Arts & Humanities	Comp-UMD College of Liberal Arts	Comp-St. Cloud State College of Liberal Arts
A)	4-year liberal arts education	4-year liberal arts education	4-year liberal arts education	4-year liberal arts education
B)	Upper Middle Income to Middle Income, urban and suburban, middle class international families	Lower Income to Middle Income suburban and rural families	Middle Income, urban, suburban and rural families	Lower Income to Middle Income suburban and rural families
C)	You aren't like everyone else. Neither are we.	Providing Transformative Experiences to Improve the Human Condition.	Experience Results.	Vibrant and Growing.
D)	May your college experience last a lifetime.	Nurture excellence in creativity, imagination, and critical and analytical reasoning to contribute to life-long learning.	Classrooms with no walls lead to careers without boundaries.	Preparing you for our modern workplace and a lifetime of inquiry, discovery and learning.
E)	Curious, make a difference, push the boundaries of your mind, prepare for all life has to offer, creative, critical thinkers, prepare for today's complex & ever-changing career environment.	Engage. Explore. Challenge. Create. Educate.	Comprehensive, Transformative, Explorative,	Reshaping how students are prepared for life, work and citizenship in the 21 st century.
F)	Web, Admissions, brochures, post cards, You Tube videos	Web, Admissions, brochures, You Tube, Magazine	Web, Admissions, brochures, You Tube,	Web, Admissions, brochures, You Tube,

Competitors - Top 3 are 1) Mankato, 2) UMD, 3) St. Cloud State

A) Competitive Frame – Describe the product category, or customer activities with which the client competes.

B) Customer Profile – Describe the characteristics of the core customers, using demographics, walk of life, and relevant activities and interests.

C) Message Argument – Describe the key benefit and the product feature that constitute the selling idea or promise made.

D) Advertising Idea – Describe the advertising idea or concept that puts the message argument in human terms

E) Executional Elements – Describe the creative techniques used in the advertising.

F) Media Notes – Describe where advertising is currently appearing.

Appendix B –

Focus Group Questions (4/14/14):

CLA Brand Focus Group

This focus group is going to be recorded for your verbal responses only. Does any one have any problems with that? All responses are confidential.

Focus group is about:

The College of Liberal Arts and your impressions of it. These questions will be about CLA and your images, thoughts, behaviors, etc. with relation to CLA.

We're going to start with some relatively easy questions...

Opening Questions:

1. What's your major?
2. How long have you been attending the College of Liberal Arts, in years or months?
3. What kinds of things are important to you about a college?
4. Do you remember where you first heard about the University of Minnesota? When?
5. Do you remember where you first heard about the College of Liberal Arts?
When?
6. What were some of your impressions of the college then?

CLA General Questions

7. How did you decide to apply to the College of Liberal Arts?
8. Would you have liked to attend a different college? Why?

Impressions About CLA

9. When you think about the College of Liberal Arts, what comes to mind now?

10. What do you like about attending the College of Liberal Arts?
11. What are some of your impressions of the college now?
12. When you think about CLA what do you see in your mind?
12. How would you recognize the College of Liberal Arts in advertising?
13. What do you most associate with the College of Liberal Arts?
14. What does the College of Liberal Arts mean to you?
15. What changes if any do you think could be made to make the college stand out more?
16. What is your overall opinion of the College of Liberal Arts?

Appendix C –

Focus Group Transcription (4/14/14):

9 Female Participants

About the college of liberals art and your impressions of it...

What's your major?

Journalism

History with Linguistics Minor

BA of Individualized Studies for English, Spanish, Teaching English as a second language

Physiology Major Leadership Minor

Global Studies & Political Science Major and Economics Minor

Global Studies with a Spanish Major

Sociology LCD

Psychology

Pre-Nursing

Years

4

4

3

2

2

3

2 years (transferred from UMD)

2 years

1 year

3. What kinds of things are important to you about a college?

important to build a skill set and something that could help me make sure that I would have a career in something I was interested in when I was done so for academic things for me that was a big part of it

challenging classes and knowledgeable professors

finding a home what's very important to me was making my dorm my home

making it feel like a second home

you feel like you like being here

because you're always here all the time

so I'd like to like where I'm going

2:27 opportunities for growth and engagement

like clubs and jobs and things that get students involved in their campus

welcoming atmosphere, school pride and school spirit, opportunities for volunteering and internships

having the majors and the programs that I wanted that was important when I was looking for a school, make my own path and make my plan fit me

get into a field that you're passionate about

Building a network of lots of different types of people and focus more on social relationships

nodding your head

somewhere you can build a community for me when I picked the U of M it was in an area that I saw myself being in for a while

important to me to get involved and engaged in order to create a community and a network of people for lots of opportunities was important

Why do you say that opportunities were important?

because I like being involved in things and being part of things in a group and doing something outside of my academics

How does a network of people help you with that?

Well, by getting in involved with different activities you meet more people and make networks and connections around you

(heads nod)

sure

(laughing)

it's true

if you expand your network and you meet new people that are interested in other things, that allows you to be open to new experiences and maybe something that they are interested in becomes something that you're interested in.

4. Do you remember where you first heard about the University of Minnesota? When?

chuckling

I remember I got an email of the application fee was free...(laughter)...or like no essay or something like that....I hadn't even considered it before that it only really changed for me after I took a tour here.

I'm assuming they sent me an email. I'm not really sure how I ended up here because no one else from my area goes here, but I'm guessing I got an email and I was like oh going to school in the Twin Cities would be cool and then I actually found out I liked the school so I ended up here

I remember junior year of high school I was looking into possibly moving up here and then my mom suggested the University and then I looked into it and really liked what I saw so

My three older siblings all went to the U ((laughter))
and so I didn't necessarily want to follow in their footsteps I kind of wanted to create my own path, but knowing the University through them I kind of fell in love with it that way that's why I chose to go here

I first found out about the U from my Dad, he graduated from the University of Minnesota and from being from the Minneapolis area I almost feel like I grew up on campus there are plenty of events throughout middle school and high school that took place at the U and I felt like I spent a lot of time here before I became a student

I grew up in St. Paul so this was like the Harvard of Minneapolis for my parents because they don't know of any other schools they just know that the U is THE U. (laughter)

If you don't go to the U then you're not smart (laughter)

So that was me

that's hard I don't know I just

I feel like growing up in MN I heard about it
starting thinking about it more in high school

I'm a transfer student from UMD and I didn't first go hear

But I did know about it

high school

I was in Duluth

I liked Duluth it was pretty

I knew it was a U of M campus but it was in Duluth

I was in high school I knew about it but I didn't research it until I was in high school

I chose it over Madison, I'm from the Milwaukee area so I was going to go to Madison, but then I toured here first and I was like oh just kidding,

This wasn't even really like my choice, I went here because my parents told me I had to look at other schools

My brother came to tour here, so it was my freshman year of high school, so he was looking at colleges, so I came with because my mom thought it would be good for me to look at other schools, it was actually the first college campus I'd ever been on and I just really liked it.

5. Do you remember where you first heard about the College of Liberal Arts?

When?

I feel like it was later on in the finding out about the University process for me because especially on the admissions end of things it was more focused on getting into the University and I was definitely more interested in the University as a whole until later on in the application process I think

I would agree with that. The first thing I heard of it was getting an acceptance letter. so it never really dawned on me until you come here and you find out the college competition dynamics and what school has what certain reputation There wasn't an alternative for what I was interested in I was just like oh, ok

Yeah I knew I was going into linguistics when I started so I looked it up oh that's in the college of liberal arts, oh ok that's what I'm doing

It's definitely more of a focus of are you accepted opt the University or not accepted

When we applied and after you find out when you're accepted and you find out what college you're in and they tell you college of liberal arts and it depends on what you're interested in, so probably like when you're applying

same

I heard about it on my tour, because I didn't understand the colleges thing really when I was touring
yeah

so then I asked what I would be in because I knew I was going into Psych and they said you'll be in CLA

I found out through Nursing, even though Nursing isn't in CLA, the first year it is.

The college part comes after the University part, do the rest of you agree?

No, when you apply to the University you apply to a college.

yeah and I guess that never really clicked for me. I was like ok I'm interested in this, so

I think because I never considered a major that wasn't in CLA that it didn't really matter to me what college because I wasn't considering different colleges and I wasn't considering different college requirements – so I just ended up here.

Because I knew all of my interests were at least in the general area of a major that was in CLA where I never thought about CBS or any other or CSE

Did you know that CBS existed?

Yeah.

I did not know. I had an admissions person at my school and I didn't know what that part of the application was I wasn't aware so then I asked her I originally wanted to go into chemistry, I wanted to go into pharmacy, I'm going into chemistry and so I told her and she said ok CLA for you, so that's what I did, I did what she told me to do. And when I got here I'm like wait there are other colleges? Because it was really weird, because the other school I applied to was UMD and I got in to CSE there and it's CLA here and so I was like ok, different acronyms different places and then I find out ok, but I'm glad to be in CLA.

I guess for me it was a bit more intentional I remember back in late middle school I was thinking about going into business and I remember my dad telling me that most CEOs have liberal arts degrees, but not business degrees and that was his way of telling me, my parents were encouraging me to pursue something in the liberal arts because they said I'd get a broader perspective and I ended up wanting to do a major that was in the liberal arts once I came here, but also I think it's a place that a lot of students choose because there's so many opportunities and so even if you're not, I wasn't 100% sure what I wanted to major in coming into the U and so I chose the college of liberal arts

I think coming in I think I knew what college I was in at some point I figured that out I knew that engineering would be a different college in a different program because I had a lot of friends that were in

engineering in a different university and then I knew about Carlson because I was considering an international business minor, which you can't do without a Carlson major, so I had done some research into that school as well. So I knew that those existed, but I definitely didn't know about all of them or if or how much it mattered, I guess

I think that division really comes clear during WW when you have to wear your college T-shirt

laugh

uh hugh

and you all pile into Mariucci

Mariucci

and it's extremely loud and everyone's yelling different cheers for each colleges and you're like oh, what cheer do I say

Lots of laughter

CLA All The Way

So, you develop that intense sense of pride no, CLA's cool

laugh

It's true

It becomes like a very intense competitive thing because then you get back into your WW group and everyone's wearing different T-shirts and you're like taking sides

Did other people experience that same thing with the shirts?

Oh yeah.

I transferred in so that wasn't a thing for me.

I remember that same day, it also made me realize how massive CLA is compared to other colleges because there were just so many CLA t-shirts

How did that make you feel?

It's a little intimidating because you don't want to be just kind of one of the many and the smaller colleges have that appeal where there are less students so they feel almost like more special, but then I found when I got into my major program that that's kind of where I found my home and it felt more individualized and more specialized there.

Maybe this is jumping ahead, but I identify first and foremost with my major departments over identifying with the college as a whole I don't know if that's everybody else's experience or not

***13:09

This is kind of a different subject – thinking about the competition between the different colleges and how that made you feel in reference to WW and t-shirts and stuff I think being a part of CLA and with the reputation that CLA sometimes has as not being as difficult to get into and not having as challenging of course work forced me to be really confident in what I was studying and in challenging myself vs. being challenged by the college as a whole because I have a lot of friend in engineering and I could be studying Math or something hard I excelled at that in high school but that's not what I wanted to do and I learned fairly quickly how to defend what I was studying and have confidence in it and know that I was on the right path for me and I was challenging myself.

I was going to say that defense of CLA I've probably defended my college or my major to my friends multiple times and it's just something you get kind of used to, I guess, because it's seen as maybe like not as challenging, but then like you said it you said it definitely puts responsibility on you to challenge yourself and be in control of your CLA experience

It gives you a lot of your own agency
right

in your academic experience.

yeah.

What were your impressions when you heard about the college of liberal arts at all those different points? What did you think about when people said, oh you'll be in the college of liberal arts?

I just thought it was kind of like a big college, it was like a big college it was kind of like more of a general colleges

I had like a bad, well it had like a bad rep with the people I was talking to case it was like you're just in the reject college because you don't have a specialized major, and I was like oh alright

(small (laughter) in agreement)

but then like obviously, when I went to the CLA Open house and I found out more about it and I was like oh ok not bad

yeah I feel like it's the same thing, just kind of like the general college if you don't know what you're doing you just kind of stay in CLA I guess, or a place to start off, not really any specific specialization compared to some of the other colleges

What do you say to friends when you defend CLA?

I talk about my two majors and a minor. How CLA has given me the ability to, I'm indecisive, I mean the reason I have two majors and a minor is because I'm indecisive about exactly what direction I want to go in my life, and so it's given me the ability to have, to widen my understanding into two, my two emphases are international relations and international economic development and in

in other more rigorous fields you can't have that same understanding of two different things and so one of the really great things about my education in CLA has been but through doing that I'm challenging myself because it is more course work and all of that.

I definitely think that that broad course that we're required to have, it's just not as, I mean my major program is specified, but then there's so much room outside of that to be more flexible and to experience a lot of different programs or different courses in different departments and not just the liberal education requirement Is broader beyond that, but with a specialized area. I guess that's what I like about CLA, it's maybe not as, you're taking this course and this course and this course and you don't have a lot of room to do what you want or to explore what you want.

16:39

I don't think I've ever found myself having to defend the college too much because I feel like anyone whose going to give me grief about getting a well rounded education isn't going to be worth the time. That sounded really harsh. If somebody's like, I'm in CBS, there's no point.

Well good for you.

Right.

Has anyone else experienced support or lack of support?

6. What were some of your impressions of the college then?

When I was meeting with my academic adviser before I applied to the journalism school, she told me that I would absolutely not get in

shocked intake of breath

and I should think about back-up plans and I was in the same position I was heart broken this is what I want to do and so she kind of helped me plan a couple back up majors and I was like something I wasn't as

passionate about and she was like this is what you should do, but it was kind of the thing where it was kind of a flat out no.

yeah.

And I was really turned off by that and then I guess it kind of encouraged me a little bit more to try harder to kind of prove to her that I could get in. But then from there, I mean, she's no longer my academic adviser because she left CLA, but I probably didn't seek her out as much after that, just because it was such a harsh meeting, I guess.

Did that change how you saw CLA or just that academic adviser?

I think for me it was that adviser, but I've heard a lot about other academic advisers with like my experience of crying and stuff, I realize that there are a lot of really good advisers out there and maybe one day, it opened a door for me cause it made me realize that I could be an adviser maybe one day?

Speaking of Journalism School, my roommate was applying she didn't know about it. She was talking with her academic adviser and she basically said do it yourself and it's due today at 4pm and so what she ended up doing was skipping all her classes just to apply for journalism school and it was the saddest thing I'd ever seen

I was probably only temporarily turned off to CLA because then I definitely wasn't seeking out making advising appointments. And then once I got in I felt more confident about what I was doing and the courses I was taking, then I sought out my new adviser and kind of made a new relationship with him where I would meet more frequently to make sure everything was going well. But it was a temporary turn-off, I guess to be treated like that.

I'm meeting with my two mentors is starting to shift it. They know me a lot more, they see things I'm doing in my current position and they're trying to dig at what I really want to do, which made me cry.

(laughter)

You come into a college that's so bit and it's very touching when people take their time out of their time to take you in.

CLA General Questions

7. How did you decide to apply to the College of Liberal Arts?

(Skipped this question.)

8. Would you have liked to attend a different college? Why?

Did any of you want to be in other colleges?

Is CLA somewhere where you wanted to land

I didn't have a different college, I just, My major is in it so I just figured, I don't have a problem with it.

I wasn't thinking about a different college because I knew I wanted to do Psych, but this past fall, I have a Nero Science minor I'm just finishing, but I wanted a double major, but CBS and CLA they don't get on terms where I could finish in four years and so I mean the Nero science major should have overlapped with the Psych major, but it wasn't and I'd have to go all the way through, like O Chem, and I didn't want to do all that. But otherwise I would have stayed in CLA too.

I guess I wasn't thinking about anything else because I'd be transferring in to the School of Nursing anyway.

How did you know you wanted to do nursing?

Both my grandmas are nurses and my brother is also going through nursing school, somewhere else and he's a junior and he really likes it and I don't know it's just a really good profession to go into. There's good pay and flexible hours and the job outlook is really good.

How did you know what major you wanted to be in?

I was always interested in law, especially criminal law, or just like criminals

I thought it sounded like a good major, plus I want to go to law school

So, I'm doing the BS for Psych, because I want to go into research and then combined Neuro science and psych, but I've always liked the brain, I don't like the more clinical side of psych, but I was always interested in the brain and how it works because I took a bunch of Psych classes in high school

I did but I changed my mind. When I came here I wanted to transfer into CSE because I wasn't aware about all the colleges we had here, but my adviser totally shot me down. At orientation you meet your academic advisor for the first time and I was like thinking about transferring into CSE, you know transferring. and he goes no. and I was like ok. claps hands. He goes listen what do you want to be? And I was like, I want to be a pharmacist or, you know as a freshman you always have a backup plan, or a biomedical engineer He said, do you even know what a biomedical engineer is? I was like ok...(laughter)

Pharmacy it is. He goes ok, why do you want to transfer and I was like well, because Chemistry is in CSE and he said, you know I had a student who tried to transfer into CSE for four years and he didn't get in so don't waste your time and I was like ok, so dreams shot down. When I came out of that room, I felt like crying. My best friend at the time, we had the same dream and she was like look, my adviser gave me all these transfer sheets to fill out and I'm going to get into CSE and I was like go away, you know. But I appreciate CLA now because the current position I'm in is for CLA and my two mentors Jen and Cory they took me in and I'm not even their student, they're not my advisers, and they shut the door and they totally made me cry for like an hour

(laughter)

Cause they took out a paper and they started to like plan with me about my future and it's all about to change soon. Basically, I appreciate CLA because outside of my one academic adviser I feel like I have connections with the higher up people who take me in even though I'm not their student.

Impressions About CLA

9. When you think about the College of Liberal Arts, what comes to mind now?

10. What do you like about attending the College of Liberal Arts?

11. What are some of your impressions of the college now?

Now I enjoy being here and I appreciate everything the college has to offer.

I only applied to the U...I only applied to the U

I think throughout my time being here I've grown as a defender of the liberal arts because I think the value of the liberal arts goes up and down as trends go around. My sophomore year there were all these articles circulating around Facebook, like top 10 degrees you shouldn't have number one a degree in liberal arts muffled laughing

and everyone's sharing it and now it's completely the opposite, everyone's talking about how great the liberal arts are. So maybe tomorrow it's going to be how bad the liberal arts are

At least three of us here work here in the FYE program. Because of the work that we do, we are developing whole side education on the value of our education that we're able to spit back
((laughter))

And I don't think it's a bad thing. Why am I here, I don't think it's a bad thing at all. But it's something I don't think I quite understood as a first year student and now I'm like 80% there.

Do you think you would try to encourage other students to apply to CLA?

Whispers – It's partly my job.

I'm talking to perspective students who are touring here, so because of being here I want to do that.

I feel like I would defiantly encourage people to apply here, to the U as a whole but specifically to CLA, but because of how well rounded of a degree you can receive here.

What would you say?

This school, where I'm from, this school doesn't really have a reputation, so I would encourage people that by coming here you're getting out of your comfort zone. No matter where your from someone's going to push you in some way and that's not what you're used to So by coming here you're expanding your knowledge, you're expanding your world knowledge and you're going to find that more so in CLA type areas.

In addition to being here, just the opportunities you'll have to be with certain people as well as outside professional development type opportunities.

I interact with quite a few students through admissions because I'm a tour guide and something I've talked to a lot of students about is the ability to double major so easily in the college of liberal arts because sometimes has students can't narrow down their interests because they are interested in so many things that really resonates with them.

Maybe even telling them that it would allow them the opportunity to explore maybe what they are interested in first and I know from there students could transfer our, but then maybe they would discover, like I did, that they really like CLA and you really like what it has to offer, but I think the opportunities for that initial exploration is one of the biggest draws of CLA.

What kinds of things has the College of liberal arts offered you since you've been here?

30

Different networking opportunities, both through my department and CLA I've talked to different alumni who are now out in the community and are willing to help you out. Going over how they weren't really sure what they wanted to do or they thought they had a plan and then found out later that it wasn't

necessarily and they ended up going down a different path and how their liberal arts degree prepared them for that and made it so that they weren't only knowledgeable in one thing.

The opportunity to study multiple things and clearly define my interests, but enabled me to have multiple, so academically it allowed me to have multiple interests prepare me for a variety of careers. I've loved being part of the FYE. Being a part of that and being a mentor and gaining a deeper sense of what it means to be a part of the college of liberal arts and what this education has given me – being part of that program has given me more confidence in my education in what I'm doing and where I'm going. The fact that CLA has given me an opportunity to be part of the FYE is great, it's one of the most impactful things I've done during my time here.

What about mentoring, what difference does mentoring make?

I think if you can hear from someone else their experience and what their take on their tips and tricks of their college experience I think it's really helpful to get not just a generic plan, but something that was more specific and applied to a person and how they viewed their experience, I think it's helpful an individualized take on something rather than the generic like you might get from advising through CLA.

Four of you are mentors to someone else.

Why do you mentor?

Because I've had a great experience, so I would like to pay it forward and maximize the potential I see in others.

I have a similar take, I've benefitted from a lot of mentors during my time at the U and so I really enjoy connecting with students with similar interests, who maybe can benefit from something I say.

This is something I struggle with a lot. People ask me why did you join the FYE and I just think it seemed like a cool thing to do. I really enjoy it and I really enjoy being a mentor and being part of the program. I don't really know why.

Fake it till you make it.

((laughter)), yep

What does that mean?

I dance a lot and so when I don't understand a step, I just try the more I try, I get it eventually – so that's just a dance thing.

((laughter))

When you think about the CLA based on what people told you, what are your impressions now?

I don't mind it, the only thing I don't like is the language requirement that's the only thing I don't like, otherwise I don't mind it

I think it's good opportunities and lots of help.

What do you mean by good opportunities?

I know There's the CLA Career Services, and they help with resumes and stuff, I haven't used it yet, but I think it would be really helpful I'm definitely going to look into that next year

How did you hear about that?

My friend went and got her resume checked out.

And she got some good help?

Ummhm yeah, she's gone in there a couple of times.

Do they offer assistance with interviews?

yes

They do like structured interviews, like practice ones.

I'm a program assistant for the CLA 1001 and 1002 class, so I actually know a lot about CLA and its workings. I know all about the Career Services Center and I enjoy the opportunities it presents. Thankfully I don't have to take another language because I'm doing the BS – I wouldn't have liked that I'm sure.

((laughter) in agreement)

11:46 The freshman course that I teach, it's extremely helpful and it's kind of one of the more, compared to other colleges, interactive and reflective courses, Program Assistants are meant to be mentors, so it's a very Students helping students community, which I feel is a little different with other colleges - It's more like everyone independently working and then in CLA there's so many other opportunities for others to engage with CLA peers who are older than them and can get help with that

Did you experience it both ways

I was the first year that they did the CLA 1001 and 1002 so going through it was actually like extremely helpful. I knew how to plan my academic advisor meetings, I knew what to talk about, I had a graduation planner so I had all my classes laid out that I needed to do. I went to career services, I got my resume critiqued there millions of times, they are so great there

Umm hum

I've done mock interviews and I've helped with that, and I've gone to a couple of workshops that help with strengths and We advocate strengths a lot in our course.

And then being a Program Assistant on that side I get to help others go through the same thing that I went through

I get to help others get to go through what I went through

13:38 How do you think their experience is? What's your perception of their experience?

I think it eases the transition – in high school you had everyone nagging you to do go stuff and everything like that

uh hugh

uh hugh

And I have to nag sometimes, I have to send emails, like you have to get your stuff done, you need to meet with me on all this stuff, so it's kind of like that transition where it's like I can tell them if they don't turn in an assignment to me it's okay you can turn it in late, but it's a learning period for them, because it's like, you're professor will not accept it

yeah

uh hugh

Can you sum up your impression of CLA?

In general it's a very helping community and it leaves me with a sense that CLA is judged pretty harshly – being in it though, I feel like we have so many resources and our success rate is probably so much better because we help students instead of throwing tests at them
((laughter))

hey you're going to fail this O Chem test if you don't study, sorry

((laughter))

um hum

How about you?

Through the CLA 1001 and 1002 class, I've gotten familiar with the resources, like career services and I also got a gold pass account, which I never knew about, which is actually really cool to look for internships

and jobs, I'll defiantly be utilizing that in the future. There's a lot of opportunities for people to help you succeed.

Do you find that's from staff and major s as well as peers or is it more peer driven to get help?

It's more peer driven, but the academic and department help

- and like staff

is still beneficial, but you have to reach out to them and with peers they'll reach out to you. You kind of have to search if you want help from a department

Does it feel like a helping place?

Yeah. I like it. There's lots of resources you can go to. They have a lot of staff. I haven't used a lot of the resources.

Were you part of the first year experience 1001 and 1002?

No. Is that like a requirement now?

Because you were a transfer student you didn't have to do it.

I took it at like UMD, so I was at CLA at UMD too so,

As a transfer student does CLA reach out to you to help you through things?

I felt like when I first came here I didn't know as much about CLA, because the CLA at UMD is obviously different at UMD than it is here and it's nice that some of it is at the U school because some of it is similar. But I feel like I learn about most of the resources from my friends and roommates and peers like they told me what they had done My roommate went to career services and got her resume critiqued and I was like

oh cool I didn't know, well I had kind of heard about it, but not much about it so I feel like I learn from people just talking about it.

Word of mouth...I feel like cause I don't remember going to an orientation thing that like told you all about the college of liberal arts and everything it has to offer, so I just hear about it.

What do you like about attending the college of liberal arts?

I like that it has my major. The major I have is really awesome.

I like that it's LCD and at UMD they didn't offer anything like that. I was thinking criminology if I stayed there This major that I have now, just seems to pertain more to what I want to do.

19:25 What about it feels fulfilling for you?

I like the courses they have, the courses they offer are interesting – I'm taking a punishment and corrections class and that just seems to pertain what I want to do

They talk about Jails and prisons and mass imprisonment and I learn a lot of new things and it's interesting criminal lawyer, criminal law

just three more years after this

not as long as a doctor

the U has an M leap program that's a Minnesota law school early admissions program, it's a research thing they're doing where you don't have to take the LSAT, U of M undergrads don't take the LSAT if they get into this program go to the U of M law school

they figure out how well they are going to do without taking the LSAT

How did you find out about that?

When I was at work at the U Card Office, a woman came in who was a professor at the law school and she told me about it. I was like what you're kidding me, that's awesome!

Other things you like about CLA?

I like the resources and everything and the helping atmosphere, but I like the variety of classes you can take as well, I think that's beneficial because I don't have to stick exactly with my major classes I can kind of explore a little and it won't hurt me at all and it won't stop me from graduating four years.

Do you think those classes might benefit you?

I took a neuro science class and that's how I figured out oh I really want to go into Neuro science too. I was just exploring and someone told me about this neuro science class and they were like yeah I think you'd really like it, I took it and then I was like, now I really want to do something with this, ((laughter)) That's how I got my minor. Just taking random classes.

Where are you going to go with that?

Ultimately I want to be a professor and do research with students at a University, like the U. So grad school after this

((laughter))

I want to go to grad school for neuro psychology.

What kind of research are you thinking about?

right now I'm interested in this new topic called neuro theology

It's that last couple years, it's been developing the science of how to combine neuro science and religion instead of having them be completely opposed. They've done FMRI's with Buddhist Monks while they've been meditating and brain waves have shown that they become calmer when they chant.

variety is good – variety of students and their interests

12. When you think about CLA what do you see in your mind?

I think it's interesting to have in the entire CLA community the range of interests. If we were in CBS, you're not going to get a whole lot of new information from them about what they are studying, I wouldn't think. Whereas, you could have really interesting conversations about our fields just in this room, just the few people we have picked out from CLA in this room. Just because there's such a wide range of majors and topics covered by the college.

I thought of a weird visual – I was thinking about a quilt that's a lot of different squares, colors and patterns and it's really big

(laughter)

it's classic in that it was probably made a long time ago, but still looks good today – that's CLA

(laughter)

that's beautiful

That's going to end up in the commencement address

Part of this is inspired by my department, but it also applies to the college, I think of one central core and then a bunch of people going out into all sorts of different directions into the world part of it is because I'm taking a core course that every global studies student has to take – every global studies student has to take these core courses a thematic emphasis and a regional emphasis very few people are studying the exact same thing but we're all mushed together in these core classes and it's an interesting experience it's like that in CLA all of these people with all of these different interests and all of these different places they are coming from and all these different places they are going are all combined together into one cohesive unit as the College of liberal arts and then from there they go off into the world and go into a billion different directions

melting pot, is like what you're describing

(laughter)

How does a central core with multiple directions work in your favor?

CLA has a huge focus on becoming more interdisciplinary in my major is right in my corner because I'm studying three different subjects what's been really nice, I get a ton of questions all the time, why are you doing that? But then I can say back I'm talking about the same things in all my classes – at least once during the semester I'll give you an example. In my English class we're talking about this guy named Furrera who had lots of ideas about literacy and we just brought that up this last week in my basics of teaching ESL class – both of them are talking about literacy, yes, So last year I was talking a lot about colonization in my American literatures class and my Spanish cultures class So I'm able to grab something from one class and bring it up in another class. Or they'll ask, who knows this person, and I'll say oh yeah, I've read him before.

That's really useful - It is nice to have some of that background to bring up in class.

Yeah – I was kind of almost shocked how often it happened to me each semester and I'm not sure why it continued to surprise me after it happened so many times, but throughout different departments all of my classes always had something that was related to another class and then I think the good thing about being part of a core and then having that broader perspective is that it allows you to be more diverse once you leave CLA so if I'm going to find, if I'm looking for a job after I graduate, I have the same core skills or concepts that someone else might have, but I have a different broader experience that makes me different or makes me stand out more so than another person.

I had kind of a similar experience with talking about the same things in multiple classes, but a lot of my classes this semester they are on different levels, in my global studies core class we talk a lot about neo-colonialism and modernity and the effects that they have on people and on cultures and then I'm in an international relations class and in that class we just talk about the things that states do but we never discuss

the impacts that those state actions have upon people or in my introductory macro economics and we talk about, one day my professor said, I don't understand people who are against globalization and development, it does such great things for the GDPS and the economies of developing countries and then you go to my global studies class and we talk about the very negative impacts that that can have upon the people and the cultures so being in CLA and being in these different, I mean we're all talking about all the same thing, but looking at them from very different perspectives and in a very interdisciplinary way.

I've had very similar experiences a lot of Spanish majors have a second major and so I think you learn to work with people who have a completely different perspective, I mean you might be looking at the same problem, but from different perspectives and understanding how other people look at problems and then kind of finding a way that you can both work together coming from your different perspectives

No. My classes don't really have things in common.

Do you think that those relatable connections make you smarter than students in other colleges?

Nervous (laughter).

Smarter?

It's an interesting idea, this makes me smarter than him because...

(laughter)

I know that "well rounded" is like the CLA buzzword.

Do you buy into that?

yeah. you end up with a more well-rounded education. I also feel like a large part of college like getting that focus on what you're going for...LE requirements are important and I'll advocate for the second language requirement all day long, but I also feel like some of the LE requirements eat away at people's

time and money. And sorry FYE, but hearing students who have to take the CLA 1001 and 1002 the majority of them are not going to be putting any effort into it competitively – I haven't taken it

It's um

The friends I have who've taken it are just like I have to get this thing out of the way.

It depends on your mentality of it and that's another thing since all three of us work there

(laughter)

we don't want to attack you

lots of (laughter)

I don't want to attack you either

How does taking a second language change how your brain works, or how this class and this class over lap does it change how you think?

Yes.

Yes. You know your knowledge, your ability to recall things and apply them to new ideas – so I don't know if I would qualify that with the word smarter because, I look at someone who can do math and I think wow you're really smart. It's different for everyone. You're ability to understand what you're doing in a certain subject.

What does well-rounded mean?

Also along those lines I couldn't say smarter because I've never been in the position of a CBS or a CSOM student and I don't know maybe they experience that in their courses too maybe they experience related topics in their courses too, I don't know for sure. I talk to other people from CLA and they experience it.

Do you find that most of your friends are from CLA?

Not really.

On the flip side of that, I lived in the global studies house last year and so a lot of my friends are studying something similar to what I am a lot of them are in CLA and the student group I'm in my friends are also related to my major. yes most of my friends are in CLA.

Yeah. Most of my friends are in CLA.

I wasn't sure if I'd even have any friends in the same commencement ceremony. Do I even have any, do I even know anyone in the same college?

(laughter)

I have a lot of engineering friends and friends in design.

For me I developed all of my friends after I got here, because I didn't know anyone at this school, whereas if I had gone to Iowa State University, where a lot of my friends went, they have the Liberal Arts and Sciences, I would have had a lot of friends outside of that. It just so happens that most of my relationships were fostered in a setting where there were CLA students.

Do professors set out to specifically overlap their courses?

I don't know how they would coordinate that.

Well now it's being – it's just that field of study that happens to relate to another field of study.

How does it happen?

it just depends like if you take my situation, I'm taking English, Spanish and English as a Second Language so my English intersected with my basics in ESL course. The other class I took was an English literature class pre 1800 – lots of colonization during that time. Spanish cultures in Latin America Europeans coming over there, so it just happens serendipity, but the things that are coming in the future for CLA are intentional interdisciplinary things so they are saying who has ideas here and putting people tighter to make interdisciplinary efforts.

It's very authentic, it's just looking at things from different perspectives there's different complimentary reading that go along with it different opinions of instructors and different class discussions

Isn't it logical that there's overlap when your studying something specific? Global studies offers classes pulled from lots of different departments, but my emphasis is international relations so to me it would make sense that even though the professors have never talked tether other, it would make sense because they're both focusing on global things

Right and a lot of my classes through the English dept., Communications and journalism a lot of what we talk about is current events, so if something happens we talk about it through the lens of the course that we're taking. It allows you to think about it from different sides of the issue. So, the multiple perspective, well –rounded thing again.

How will a well-rounded perspective help you?

I feel like I can understand it because in my different course work I can see where my professor that focuses on international relations may have a lack of knowledge of the impacts of what those are in terms of modernity and neo-colonialism. And so that fact that I have more well-rounded disciplinary knowledge –

hopefully in a government agency there's a niche for someone like me who can make those connections and think critically about this is a good policy in this aspect, but what will it do if we're in this side.

Let's think about this, let's be rational and think about the impacts this is going to have.

How do you frame that conversation?

I think it is what you said, framing it as let's think about it as a whole because what they are seeing as building a bridge or a dam their goal doesn't look at the whole picture.

Need to focus on the human element.

I would hope the person making decisions isn't just an engineer.

It's important to think critically and challenge your professors, even if you don't do it a lot. You kind of have to pick your battles. But it does allow you to think critically so you can come away knowing that maybe they're not right in their assumptions about language changes which is natural, but some professors obstruct it.

We're presented with problems frequently in classes to discuss with others, so working with others using different perspectives pulling from your experience from other classes that might overlap over the same idea, helps to shape how you might solve a problem and understanding that there's probably more than one way to solve a problem

yeah going off that, I believe that most things have more than one solution. so the collaborative effort or being able to look at something from many different sides I think that's kind of important an example in one of my classes we're working on a magazine someone will shout something out and then another idea

and then another and you end up with something great once you've taken in everyone's perspective – collaboration and looking at it from different sides

Why do you think that's helpful?

You think you have the best you have to get and then someone else will say something and then it's like oh yeah. So I guess the benefit of it is just so many different perspectives kind of allows for a better or best outcome

Collaboration in your classes not in your classes?

In the FYE we have a team of 10 people that supervise a large group of student instructors that supervise about 100 and within our larger team, we're divided into smaller teams to work on specific projects and they're coming from different majors, different ideas, different experiences, I guess that's the collaboration you would find there and that's a huge piece for us to develop professionally and feel the support of staff members who care about us and want us to get the most out of our experience.

12. Do you think you'd be able to recognize the College of Liberal Arts in advertising?

long pause

What does that mean?

If it was contrasted to a different college, probably. If it was on it's own, because of how large the college of liberal arts is and because it's part of the University of Minnesota I think that differentiation would be more difficult

What would have to be in it to differentiate it?

would you be able to tell the difference between CSE and CLA students on a poster?

possibly

(laughter)

A bunch of guy sin CSE.

(laughter)

I'm just thinking of like my friends and the photos I see of them from other college and realistically, what makes a CLA student differ in appearance from a student in another college? nothing.

I think if you're thinking about what you would use to represent the college that might be different enough to differentiate. If you're trying to show students being engaged in a classroom setting, students in CBS would be in a lab, whereas students in CLA it might be small group discussion based setting.

It's funny actually because I was in photos for CLA ambassadors and I just think we're just people you can't look at that and say oh CLA students outside Johnston on the stairs and then we were laying in the grass and jumping and laughing

laughing

We send that out

There was another photo that they used of people around a table and they were pointing looking like they were talking bout stuff. so interacting they looked and smiled at the camera

13. What do you most associate with the College of Liberal Arts?

community would be a big part of it a lot of people in CLA have similar enough experiences that you feel like you're part of a community which is true of many colleges, but that would be a highlight for me.

Looking back at the courses I took, there's an emphasis on communication skills. Spend a lot of my time with FYE, it's a huge part of what I do here.

Do you think you'll still be friends with people from the FYE after you leave the College of Liberal arts?

yeah.

She should say yes.

I think it's more than a work position. We're a big family.

And you're taking out a freshman class there's 2500 students and out of that you're breaking it down to 100 people who really care and want to foster the first year experience, then if you're a PAL you're breaking it down even more to 10 people, and you have people that are really into it. You don't unless you enjoy it and that's really something you want to be a part of it.

I think learning how to be a mentor is very important. I think being part of FYE made me realize a lot of strengths I didn't realize I had. I came into FYE for not the right reasons. It was an easy job, that's all I cared about, but the more I did it the more I started to care a lot. It does something to your heart. I've transformed a lot since first semester. You learn to become more organized and you gain a lot of strengths from it and you learn how to mentor someone. I think my students enjoy me as their mentor, because I do take lots of time to mentor them. I give them advice from school to relationships and that's how I know their comfort level they feel with me. For the second time you meet me to open up about your relationships is a lot for me. And I've learned how to effectively communicate with people. PAing makes me feel well-rounded

(laughter)

because we do have lots of training on different topics, even on how to be happy.

How to work with your students in months of slump to help them be happy.

And I think someone is well rounded when they can take something from a totally different subject and implement it into something else.

I ran for the Hmong student association, activities chair, I can take all the workshops I've had and implement it in there, for say if I wanted to do a resume workshop for the Hmong people I have been trained from PAing to critique resumes and I can bring that to a population where they are afraid to contact Career Services because people seek help in people who look like them more.

I'm also a part of SELP ant they trained me in resume writing, so I've had the training like three times, but it's all different aspects. And so I critiqued my brother's resume and I also do it for my friends and they get positions, so it's good.

(laughter)

We're encouraged to get involved in SELP because it's affiliated over in STSS it's worth while because we're getting a shiny little paper weight out of it and a banquet.

Being on the radio was defiantly a highlight for me.

I spent a year on the Crew team, had I not come here I wouldn't have had that opportunity. Friendships and the teamwork aspect of it.

You feel like you had time to do these things?

yeah

part of it is finding experiences that supplement your academics and you can't just graduate college with a degree and get a job, you have to have skills and experiences especially in a lot of liberal arts degrees and maybe that's also important to me because I'm in honors - experiences are a big thing to supplement your education there's an emphasis on academics, but also emphasis on engagement and experiences

If it's important to you then you make the time to make it work, you just kind of figure it out.

Finding experiences that align with my interests and what's important to me so the internship that I do for 10 hours a week is something that I would do no matter what because I love it. and so that makes it easier to balance academics and fun if you find extracurricular opportunities that you find engaging and that you enjoy

How do you find those opportunities?

I'm addicted to seeking them out – talking to other students, talking to my adviser looking on line for opportunities

my cousin did crew when she was here and it was always something that I was interested in. it came around to my journey year and I figured it was my last chance to do it. As a freshman I don't know that I could have handled it because I didn't have my time management skills down yet, and I wasn't as passionate about my course work yet so I needed to spend more time on it.

For more academic opportunities, one of my major and minor departments sends out emails with different events or job opportunities and I read them because they're from my departments. There are times when I think do I really have time to be subscribe to so many emails, but then I'll read the one that I am like, I'm so glad I read it. And I keep reading for that reason. Because it's something that I'm interested in.

14. What does the College of Liberal Arts mean to you?

15. What changes if any do you think could be made to make the college stand out more?

Since there's a language requirement you could do like CSOM where you can do a language or study abroad. Study abroad instead of taking four semesters of a language and that would be your requirement.

I think greater involvement and advertising of their student groups could help – I'm going to be a CLA ambassador and that's promoting CLA a lot and like student board, I have a bunch of friends on CLA Student board - We have a ton of CLA student groups, it's just not many people are aware of them.

Why do you think that is?

Because they're not as interesting most people tend to like tend to gravitate to the big ones like WW leaders, orientation leaders and admissions ambassadors

Yeah, uh hugh

Why do you think they gravitate to those?

Well everyone had to do WW

yeah

Because it's volunteer opportunities but you're dealing with the entire University and CLA Ambassadors, for instance, you're just dealing with CLA things

How did you hear about CLA Ambassadors?

From my PAL.

- I've gotten emails

Like everyone gotten, they sent out a bunch of emails too

- But I mean I saw it but I didn't really read it, and that's one thing I feel like we get so many emails

Sometimes I don't want to read them. I get so many emails from other places too.

When you hear about these opportunities do they sound interesting to you?

I'm definitely glad I found out through my CLA class or I wouldn't have found out about gold pass other cool opportunities, same thing with like career services and I know you learn about all this stuff when you get here, and they tell you about all the different resources, but you hear about it once and then you forget about it. The CLA class is definitely a good reminder these are resources and you should definitely utilize them – especially like my PA too, whenever she sends out an email she says, I think this is a great opportunity, or she'll tell us about things going on campus and say you guys should really check this out or go here or whatever.

Does it make a difference to get an email from a PA vs. the college?

I think it definitely does, I think there were a couple events she's done it herself, she'll say I'm gonna be here if you guys want to go, I'll see you there.

I think this is a great opportunity you guys should really check this out

Would you say you value a message from a PA more?

Definitely and I'm more likely to read it because I know there could be other information in there about homework assignments or something so I'm more likely to pay attention to an email from my PA than just a mass email that has a bunch of different advertisements for

First Year Experience

Is that kind of the funnel?

yeah, when we have trainings we learn about the different resources more in-depth and then we convey them through our emails we also have updates saying hey this is going on tell your students, hey here's this opportunities tell your students, we are constitutently getting emails everything we get we have to tell our students

laughing

So do you think a PA is a good spokesperson for CLA?

Yeah! I think so, we understand esp. if you've taken the course you understand all the levels of it – you understand being just a student, you understand being a PA and you understand how the administrative works a little better and you understand how the resources work a little better, like I know a couple people who work in career services just from being a PA I've met other people and you have that student perspective with also the administrative background of knowledge

And you feel like students respect that?

I think so, hopefully. Hopefully students respect that.

What's the difference between me being a PA and you being a PA? Would it make a difference?

Yes. Students are more willing to talk to me about things that are going on, like I've had a student come up to me and be like I'm partying way to much and I'm not sure what to do because I'm failing this class and they wouldn't be comfortable

- Um hum

telling another adult about it, because like they're going to be judged, but me I see it everyday

- It's probably because we're students too

We understand it and people don't like to think about adults partying, they don't want to talk to administrators about it, they're going to get mad at me, With me I was like you've got to stop partying

Does it make you worried that they are shading with you?

No. I think it's great they share with me, the more they share with me the better, the better they're going to get out of this experience.

The more I can help them the more I know them the more I can help them.

Do you feel like you have the support from your training?

Yeah. We're working on training right now, that's one of the things we're going to address next year, the training as of now the training right now is more reflective as how we feel as a PA instead of implementing it so I've had to kind of wing it sometimes.

But training is centrally going to Training next year is going to prepare us for, yeah, (laughter)

these "situations" laughter

cause we weren't expecting people to do that

We weren't expecting people to not respond to us, that's also a different problem, not turn in their assignments, not meeting with me, not be in any contact with me. That's also been a big issue.

Do you feel comfortable going to an administrator or a staff member?

I go to my PAL if I need to. But I won't have that next year. Paul's really good, Paul and Jen are my supervisors, I can go to them basically if I'm having trouble keeping up on my grading or any personal issues that are influencing my job. From a student perspective, I still don't feel that comfortable going to Paul and saying I'm partying I would never say that. I don't even think I would talk to my parents about that, honestly.

I would talk to my friends I would be like (whispers) guys I'm failing this class. You need someone in that moment who can relate to you in that moment

you may have been a huge partier in college, but you're not in that moment doing that exact same thing

How do you know about the WW and orientation Leader opportunities?

I've gotten emails that say be a welcome week leader I think they have little pamphlets they put on the tables in the dining halls

I know you see it on the bridge, I've had a friend who a Welcome Week leader and then she was an orientation leaders too that's how I heard about it I didn't really know about the orientation leader until my friend was like I'm applying to be an orientation leader. I don't really know what that is, but that's great!

An email about being an OL isn't coming from your PA, do you still read it?

I don't feel like you have to read it. You see it in the subject.

- If it sounds interesting then you read it.

Yeah. if I'm interested I will look to see when the deadline is and what things you need for the application

What makes it sound interesting?

Money.

I stayed in contact with my Welcome Week leader and then she referred me to be a Welcome Week leader, so that's how I got involved.

so I hear about things from my superiors and I try my best to stay in contact with people who've helped me in the past and then they can give me advice and they can refer me for other things as well I think that's the best way to hear it

I saw those pamphlets all around and my friends were like do you want to be a Welcome Week leader with us and I was like no

But then I saw that I got referred and my Welcome Week leader sent me an email saying hey I think you'd be great at this, you should do this, and I did

Referral peers what makes you jump at chances

CLA Wants You – would that peak your interest?

yeah. Wants me for what?

(laughter)

I'd look and see what.

CLA Happy to have you?

No from all and (laughter)

CLA Come and explore?

meh grunts all around.

It's got to be specific I feel like – the best catchers are going to more are you looking for leadership

experience check out this

are you looking for

- internships check out this x2

- volunteer opportunities

it's got to be tailored to what we want

What will make me open this world be, Do you want to do research on campus and then I open it because

yeah I do and "here's how."

16. What is your overall opinion of the College of Liberal Arts?

I think it's a great college. I think that being in CLA we aren't as...being a physiology major a science based major in CLA I'm looked down on a lot. Because I came in as Chemistry major vs. CSE chemistry so I would have chemistry labs and the people in there would ignore you right away. I felt a lot of discrimination just because I was in CLA's chemistry I remember my lab partners and they were CBS and CSE and they would ask me about mine and they said you must be in CSE because you're Chem and I say no I'm CLA and they'd go Oooooohhhh. I feel like we don't look down upon any other colleges, I feel like so far, a lot of the CSE people that I meet they look down on us a lot

I like it.

I like my major I'm minoring in philosophy I like what they have to offer.

Would you recommend to somebody to apply for CLA?

It depends on what they were interested in. My little sister wants to do psychology so I'd tell her oh well CLA has Psychology.

It's linked to the major for you

Yeah

I definitely like the major I have I don't really think the college really affected it.

What if somebody didn't know what they wanted to do?

- I would tell them CLA because it has a lot of different majors and you can do a lot of different careers with it.

I think it's a great atmosphere and helps you get used to the campus a little more and it helps you advance in your professional career a lot better than some of the other ones are

it's not your stereotypical college. It doesn't just make you study take tests and that's it there are interactions that occur and those interactions are what helps people and those interactions are what helps drive people to get engaged and get involved in student groups and volunteer opportunities and internships and research and everything like that.

I would recommend to someone if they were undecided to college of liberal arts because they have those resources

- That's true

and it's so driven to make them decide on something that they really want to do

If someone really wants to be a mechanical engineer then I would be like well CSE if they were dead set on something else

but if they had no idea and they were undecided, Maybe engineering try college of liberal arts first

If someone were to write off CLA as in like oh it's CLA I would definitely be able to give them the benefits of CLA and be able to talk it up I feel like because I feel like it's a good place to be I would encourage people to give it a chance

- I would definitely explain to them if they say it's the reject college, I would explain to them there's lots of people who can get...there's so many different majors that they can take like any career out of it, you wouldn't think that like a CLA college would be like a major would be like for a doctor, because my roommate wants to be a doctor and I thought for sure you couldn't take a major from CLA to be a doctor that's interesting
you can.

So you think you can get a career out of CLA?

You have a better percentage of getting a career out of CLA with a liberal arts degree vs. like an engineering degree
yeah
where you can only go into engineering with a CSE degree

Do you feel like you look up to the other colleges?

I do admire the hard work they do because they are, they're paths re very complicated a lot of times they take a lot of science and math classes all at once. I know because adviser tried to make me do that. But I was convinced to push back my graduation date so I could fit in more liberal arts and I do appreciate that a lot because of that transferrable skill that I have is incomparable to the stress that you have to all the core classes that you have to take and the rushed graduation date might not mean anything to you and I feel like CLA is great because it gives a lot of meaning to your graduation

Kind of going off what she said, I feel like CLA is a more inclusive college than an exclusive college. Once in CLA I've never felt really out of place or excluded from anything.

I think there are places where CLA is more exclusive. I think people in general are inclusive, but the college in general of how it accepts or doesn't accept people can defiantly be exclusive. I'm a community Advisor and just speaking to some of my residence who were denied and want to apply to get back in they are in CEHD.

yeah

and even with specialized degree programs, I've heard the journalism school is competitive to apply into and an intense process. I think there is exclusivity.

Do you think that students in CEHD are looked down on by CLA?

Oh Yeah. There's definite terms I've heard about other people and I've had to check myself before an interaction so I'm not perpetuating the stereotype that's going around there's reputations about Carlson we don't have the most amicable feelings toward CSE because of how they treat us. CBS and CFANS are more mild, it's just kind of a big three angst.

But CSE has real competition with CBS too.

yeah

I feel like there are so many people who look lonely at CLA because they are being forced into science fields by their parents.

yeah

that's true

an Indian friend of mine was hanging out with a bunch of other Indians and being picked on for being in CLA, but one of the members of the group pulled her aside and said you are so lucky to be in CLA I don't want opt be in mechanical engineering at all. And they're all really envious of her.

I think the college of liberal arts is a good place to be and I feel like I'll be set once I graduate but that's a combination of my experiences as well as my education. I feel ice my experiences are shaping me more for the real world den my education is backing up my experiences. I think all of us could say at one point that we feel good to be here.

I really like being a part of the college of liberal arts and I feel like its afforded me a lot of opportunities both academically because I've had the opportunity to create my own path, I've had so many opportunities through being part of the FYE, so I think it fosters both academic experiences and outside experiences as well.

I really like being a part of CLA because it's a college where students really want to be there because they are passionate about their majors and there's a lot of support from the college of liberal arts and they see a student as a whole person rather than just heir academic side and so I've felt a lot of support in the college of liberal arts.

Overall I've enjoyed my experience at CLA.

Being in CLA allows us to have more of an open mind. Where I'll have a friend that's like oh that's your homework assignment where I have to do this list of problems and your just out taking pictures or writing

an article and it's being award heat we're able to do what we're passionate bout and how if they had to do what I liked to do or I had to do what they liked to Dao it wouldn't be as good of a fit and I like that CLA allows us to have that open minded perspectives about what we do and what's considered smart.

Definitely

Appendix D –

ZMET Interview Steps & Questions:

Step 1 – Initial Questions & Follow-up Questions About Pictures

How does this picture make you feel?

How does it remind you about eco cars?

Tell me the story related to this picture.

Follow-up questions (restating, summarizing), other perspectives – listen for key concepts.

Repeat...

Step 2 – Picture Sorting

Please sort your pictures into meaningful piles or groups and tell me the label or description you'd use for each pile – organize them by your own categorization.

Step 3 – Laddering Questions to Find Links

Can you tell me why you put these pictures into this pile?

Compare this picture with this picture and tell me how they are similar?

How are they different?

How does that relate to your concept of eco cars?

What kind of problems do you think about when you consider this picture?

Step 4 – Select a Picture to Envision a Scene

Which picture most represents how you feel about eco cars?

Imagine yourself in the picture, how do you feel?

What else is around you ?

What are you thinking?

What are you doing?

How do you feel?

Imagine other people or things in the scene, how can they help you with a task or overcome a challenge?

Who would they be and what would they do? Why are these other people or things significant to you.

Repeat with two other images...

Step 5 – Sensory Image Questions

What kind of sound(s) would eco cars make?

What kinds of smells do you associate with eco cars?

If you could touch an eco car, would it feel like?

Appendix E –**ZMET Single Word Response Coding:**

Each color represents an individual participant and was used as a way to organize the coding. Each column is titled for what it represents.

Repeated Words per Individual Participant	Rank 60% or Greater Use	# Of Participants Who Used Word	Repeated Words per Individual Participant - Sorted	Rank 60% or Greater Use
a lot	12	5	college	29
a lot	10		people	20
a lot	8		students	11
a lot	8		classes	11
a lot of	8		cla	11
about	19	5	different	14
about	12	2	to	13
about	9		don't	8
about	9		friends	9
about	35		work	17
academic	8		know	9
academic	8	2	other	17
adviser	8	2	thinking	10
after	12		experiences	8
all	9		learning	9
all	12		major	13
amazing	10		more	22
American	8	3	take	9
art	13		a lot	8
art	10		about	19
art	20		doing	14
arts	10		like	10
as	10	4	want	9
aspect	8		what	15
associate	8		world	8
backgrounds	8		be	12
balance	12		feel	8
be	16	4	globe	12
be a bridge	12		have	12
becoming one	9		interests	10
being	14		look	8
being	9		school	8
better jobs	9		time	20

big	11		art	20
books	12	2	businesses	25
books	14		education	23
building	14		get	12
business	8		go in there	9
businesses	25	3	going	9
campus	8		group	12
can	9		happy	9
career	9	2	help	10
career	9		how easy	15
certain	13		I	16
challenge	11		idea	9
child	10		liberal arts	8
cla	43		of	9
cla	35		person	9
cla	20		professor	9
cla	20		study	8
cla	14		talk	8
cla	9		the	19
cla	31		thing	21
cla	11		understand	8
cla	11	10	university	8
class	33		with	22
class	34		year	8
class	15		academic	8
class	14		all	9
class	14		books	12
class	11		career	9
class	8		community	8
class	19		culture	10
classes	11	11	decisions	10
classes	20		for	10
classes	10		good	13
college	29	13	here	9
college	15		international	9
college	14		job	11
college	14		life	10
college	14		makes	15
college	13		me	12
college	12		minor	8
college	12		no	9
college	11		on	11
college	36		one	8

college	35		out	11
college	61		psychology	8
college of liberal arts (cla)	19	move up to cla	reminders	8
color	10		research	9
communication	15		someone	8
community	8	2	walking	31
community	13		when	8
confident	9		where	11
connections	10		you	28
courses	9			
creativity	13			
crowd	8			
cultural	13			
culture	10	2		
dance	20			
decided	8			
decisions	10	2		
degree	9			
different	39			
different	35			
different	28			
different	21			
different	17			
different	9			
different	8			
different	37			
different	8			
differently	14	10		
difficult	9			
discussion	11			
diversity	8			
do	22			
do	15			
do	10			
doing	14	5		
doing	18			
don't	10			
don't fall	10			
don't have to	10			
don't	13			
don't	8			
don't mind	10			
don't pursue	8			
don't see	8	8		

educate	10	
education	13	
education	23	3
encounter	9	
English	11	
enjoy	16	
everyone	11	
experience	21	
experience	14	
experience	9	
experiences	8	6
experiences	17	
experiences	8	
family	10	
feel	17	
feel	9	
feel	8	
feel	8	4
find out more	12	
first	10	
for	13	
for international	10	2
freshman	8	
friend	28	
friend	25	
friend	10	
friend	9	
friend with	16	
friends	9	8
friends	17	
friends	8	
from	9	
fulfilled	8	
fun	11	
fye course	9	
general	8	
get	9	
get	12	
get paint on the concrete	12	3
global	12	
global	18	
global studies	11	
globe	12	4
go	13	

go	10	
go in there	9	3
goes to	14	
going	15	
going	9	3
good	13	2
good	15	
got the majority	8	
graduate	17	
great	13	
group	12	3
group	14	
groups	11	
happy	9	3
happy	15	
happy	11	
hard	9	
have	27	
have	14	
have	9	
have	12	4
help	10	3
help	15	
help	14	
help	10	
here	9	2
here	8	
high	9	
high school	8	
history	9	
hope	8	
how	13	
how	12	
how easy	15	3
I	12	
I did I spilled another	11	
I don't have to fly	16	3
idea	9	3
idea	16	
idea	12	
if I knew where to go	8	
important	9	
intense	13	
interest	8	

interested	8	
interests	10	4
interests	19	
international	9	2
international	20	
internship	9	
into	12	
involved	9	
job	11	2
job	33	
know	9	7
know	15	
know	15	
know	14	
know	14	
know	11	
knowledgege	12	
Latin America	10	
learn	15	
learn	8	
learn	9	
learn	8	
learning	9	6
learning	12	
liberal arts	8	3
liberal arts	18	
liberal arts	12	
life	10	2
life	16	
like	10	5
like	16	
like	16	
like	13	
like	10	
look	8	4
look	15	
look	10	
looking	9	
love	11	
major	13	6
major	37	
major	21	
major	20	
major	15	

majors	30	
make	9	
makes school	12	
makes you like	15	2
math	17	
me	12	2
me	20	
means to	9	
meet	9	
minor	8	2
minor	9	
mom	20	
money	11	
more	12	
more	12	
more	11	
more	8	
more	23	
more reflective	22	6
museum	8	
my life	27	
need	10	
no	8	
no one tells you	9	2
of	33	
of	33	
of fun from him	9	3
on	11	2
on	17	
one	17	
one	8	2
open	8	
opportunities	9	
other	20	
other	20	
other	9	
other	8	
other	9	
other at this point	9	
other massive	17	7
out	11	2
out	16	
outside of	8	
own	13	

parents	8	
part on campus	8	
path	10	
pay	8	
people	20	12
people	17	
people	11	
people	49	
people	36	
people	36	
people	31	
people	25	
people	24	
people	21	
people	43	
people in	114	
person	9	3
person	13	
person	12	
perspectives	20	
political science	8	
positive	9	
pride	10	
problem	9	
professor	9	3
professor	21	
professor	10	
programs	15	
project	12	
psych	13	
psychology	8	2
puppies	12	
questions	12	
reminded me	10	
reminders	8	2
reputation	8	
research	9	2
research	17	
resources	10	
rubrics cube	8	
Russia	8	
same	13	
school	8	4
school	28	

school	24	
school	10	
science	23	
see	9	
she and I are really	9	
similar	8	
so	13	
so broad	11	
society	13	
some	9	
someone	8	2
someone	8	
something	9	
Spanish	20	
sports	11	
stretch self	9	
struggle	15	
student	18	
student	13	
student	35	
students	11	11
students	49	
students	37	
students	28	
students	27	
students	25	
students	12	
students	22	
studies	11	
study	8	3
study	12	
support	8	
take	16	
take	11	
take	10	
take	10	
take	9	
take classes	9	6
talk	8	3
talk	11	
talk	10	
that	10	
that	8	
the biggest	15	

the college of liberal arts	8	
the more you know	19	3
them	12	
they	13	
thing	8	
thing	21	3
things	23	
think	15	
think	13	
think	12	
think	12	
think	10	
think	9	
thinking	10	7
this	8	
time	14	
time	13	
time	8	
time	20	4
to	17	
to	15	
to	14	
to	8	
to	73	
to	78	
to	22	
to do that	13	9
to look at it for	26	
together	9	
transferred	10	
types	13	
understainging	14	
understand	8	3
understand	10	
unemployed	9	
university	8	3
university	8	
university	9	
value	13	
very	9	
walk	10	
walking	31	2
want	9	5
want	18	

want	10	
want	9	
wanted	8	
water	13	
way	17	
way	13	
welcome week	14	
well to	9	
what	26	
what	15	
what	9	
what are you going to do	15	5
what I'm doing with my life	25	
when	8	
when I didn't walk	8	2
where do I want to go	12	
where I've come from	11	2
with	22	3
with	8	
with	27	
work	13	
work	11	
work	10	
work	10	
work	8	
work	8	
work	17	8
work	18	
working	9	
world	8	5
world	13	
world	9	
world	8	
world	9	
year	8	3
year	10	
year	8	
you	9	
you	28	2

Appendix F –**ZMET Paired-Construct Coding:**

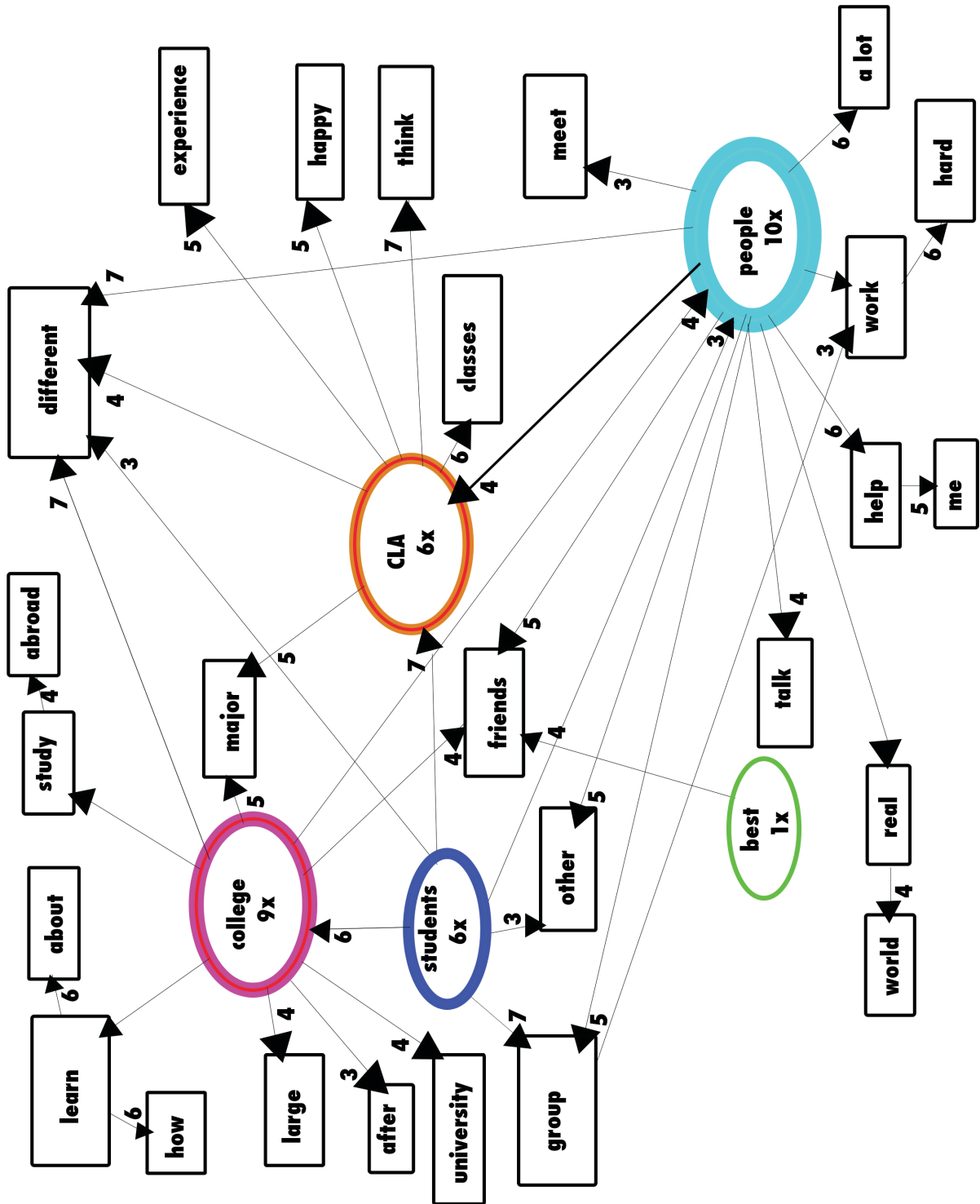
Each letter in the “Participants Pairing” column color represents an individual participant and was used to track which participants had used the construct pairing.

Nearest Central Construct	Single Word	Word Pair	Participants Paring	# Of Participants Paired	Percent of Participants
college	college	different	a,c,d,f,h,j,l	7	58%
people	people	different	a,c,d,f,h,j,l	7	
students	students	cla	a,b,c,d,f,j,k	7	
students	students	groups	a,b,c,d,e,l,k	7	
cla	cla	think	e,f,g,h,l,,j,k	7	
people	people	help	b,d,e,h,j,k,l	6	
people	people	lot, a	d,e,g,h,j,k	6	
students	students	college	a,b,d,e,f,j	6	
cla	cla	classes	a,c,e,l,j,l	6	
people	hard	work	a,b,e,f,g,j	6	
college	learn	about	a,c,f,g,j,l	6	50%
college	learn	how	a,e,f,g,h,l	6	
college	college	major	b,e,f,g,k	5	
people	people	other	b,c,d,h,j	5	
people	people	group	c,e,f,j,k	5	
people	people	friends	a,b,c,h,j	5	
cla	cla	majors	b,e,f,g,k	5	
cla	cla	experience	a,e,l,j,k	5	
cla	cla	happy	c,e,g,l,k	5	
people	help	me	b,e,g,k,l	5	42%
college	college	people	b,c,j,k	4	
college	college	university	a,f,k,l	4	
college	college	large	c,f,k,l	4	
college	college	friends	d,e,f,k	4	
people	people	cla	b,c,j,k	4	
people	people	talk	a,c,j,k	4	
cla	cla	different	a,b,g,i	4	
college	study	abroad	b,e,k,l	4	
people	real	world	b,d,h,l	4	
no sig link	best	friends	b,c,h,j	4	33%
college	college	after	a,b,j	3	

people	people	meet	c,j,k	3	
students	students	other	e,f,k	3	
students	students	different	a,e,f	3	
students	students	people	a,f,h	3	
students	group	work	c,d,j	3	25%
students	students	walking	f,j	2	
students	students	help	a,k	2	17%
college	college	education	b	1	
people	people	students	c	1	
people	people	work	g	1	
cla	cla	part of	e	1	
cla	cla	graduating of liberal	g	1	
college	college	arts		0	
college	college	most		0	
college	college	other		0	
cla	cla	students	NA	0	
cla	cla	people	NA	0	
cla	cla	college	na	0	
cla	cla	class	na	0	


Appendix G –

ZMET Consensus Map:



Appendix H –

Online Survey Questions:



Thank you for taking my survey today. It seeks to gauge more specific perceptions and attitudes related to the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) for the purpose of creating more specified branding efforts for the college.

Your response is completely anonymous and should only take 10-15 minutes.

SECTION 1: ENGAGEMENT

Please read the question carefully and then rate it how important it is to you, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important.

	Very Unimportant	2	3	4	Very Important
How important is learning to you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How important is your major to you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How important are engagement opportunities outside of the classroom to you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please read the question carefully and then rate it on your awareness, where 1 = very unaware and 5 = very aware.

	Very Unaware	2	3	4	Very Aware
How aware are you of CLA engagement opportunities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please rate each of the following on how helpful they are at helping you find engagement opportunities outside of the classroom.

	Not helpful	Somewhat helpful	Helpful	Very helpful	Have never asked
CLA Staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CLA Faculty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your Friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other Family Members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other <input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In an average week during the school year, how often do you participate in engagement opportunities outside the classroom?

- ☐ Never
☐ 1-2 times a week
☐ 2-3 times a week
☐ 3-4 times a week
☐ 4-5 times a week
☐ 5-6 times a week
☐ More than 6 times a week

Please rank how valuable each of the following engagement opportunities are. A ranking of 1 means you think it's the most valuable.

(Directional Note: Click on the number to the right, drag that selection, and drop it into your preferred order.)

Volunteering

Paid internship

Unpaid Internship

Mentoring another student(s)

Being mentored by another student

Participating in a CLA student group

Participating in a non-CLA student group

Other - Please specify:

Please rank how likely you would be to participate in each of the following engagement opportunities are. A ranking of 1 means you'd prefer that opportunity most.

(Directional Note: Click on the number to the right, drag that selection, and drop it into your preferred order.)

Volunteering

Paid internship

Unpaid Internship

Mentoring another student(s)

Being mentored by another student

Participating in a CLA student group

Participating in a non-CLA student group

Other - Please specify:

Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how important it is to you, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important.

	Very Unimportant	2	3	4	Very Important
How important do you think it is to be mentored?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how important it is to you, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important.

	Very Unimportant	2	3	4	Very Important
How important do you think it is to be a mentor?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION 2: CONNECTING

Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how important it is to you, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important.

	Very Unimportant	2	3	4	Very Important
Please rate the importance of making connections/meeting people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How strongly do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Making connections/meeting people leads to new friendships.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Making connections/meeting people leads to mentoring opportunities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Making connections/meeting people will help me have new experiences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Making connections/meeting people leads to future job opportunities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How strongly do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My CLA peers are helpful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My CLA friends are helpful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My CLA mentors are helpful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My CLA Academic Advisers are helpful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My CLA departmental advisers are helpful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CLA staff are helpful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CLA faculty are helpful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CLA alumni are helpful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION 3: DECISION-MAKING

Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how encouraged you are, where 1 = very discouraged and 5 = very encouraged.

	Very Discouraged	2	3	4	Very Encouraged
How encouraged are you to explore engagement opportunities in CLA?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how encouraged you are, where 1 = very discouraged and 5 = very encouraged.

	Very Discouraged	2	3	4	Very Encouraged
How encouraged are you to explore classes outside your major?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please rank by importance each of the following in you decision-making processes.

(Directional Note: Click on the number to the right, drag that selection, and drop it into your preferred order.)

Peers

Friends

Mentors

Parents

Other Family Members

Academic Advisers

Departmental Advisers

Other CLA Staff

Faculty

Other - Please specify:

How strongly do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
CLA is a different college because the faculty are diverse.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CLA is a different college because the students are diverse.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CLA is a different college because the staff are diverse.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CLA is a different college because of the variety of majors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CLA is a different college because I can get help when I need it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CLA is a different college because I can choose my classes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CLA is a different college because of its size.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CLA is a different college because I'm learning how to think critically.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how much CLA is preparing you, where 1 = very unprepared and 5 = very prepared.

	Very Unprepared	2	3	4	Very Prepared
Is CLA helping you be prepared to enter the workforce after you graduate?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how important, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important.

	Very Unimportant	2	3	4	Very Important
How important was CLA's reputation in your decision to attend the University of Minnesota?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how much CLA's reputation would affect your decision, where 1 = very unaffected and 5 = very affected.

	Very Unaffected	2	3	4	Very Affected
How much does CLA's reputation affect a recommendation you might make to a friend or family member to attend the University of Minnesota?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION 4: YOUR ENGAGEMENT

Have you ever participated in the following engagement activities?

	Never, and probably never will.	No, and I probably won't have time.	No, but I would like to.	Yes, but only during one semester.	Yes, and more than one semester.
Paid internship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unpaid Internship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Part-time on-campus job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Part-time off-campus job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Full-time on-campus job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Full-time off-campus job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CLA student group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Non-CLA student group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Peer mentoring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mentored by a peer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other engagement activity <input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please read the question carefully and then rate it on value, where 1 = very bad and 5 = very good.

	Very Bad	2	3	4	Very Good
How would you rate the financial value of a CLA education?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please read the question carefully and then rate it on value, where 1 = very bad and 5 = very good.

	Very Bad	2	3	4	Very Good
How would you rate the personal value of a CLA education?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how well you like, where 1 = really don't like and 5 = really like.

	I'd like to transfer.	Don't really like it.	Don't have a choice; it's where my major is.	Like It	Love It!
How do you like being in CLA?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

FINAL SECTION: DEMOGRAPHICS

What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Transgender
☐ Prefer not to specify
☐ Other

How old are you?

Please specify your ethnicity:

- ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
☐ Black/African American
☐ Hispanic/Latino
☐ Native American/American Indian
☐ White
☐ Other

☐ Prefer not to specify

What year are you in school?

What is your major(s)?

Appendix I –**Focus Group Coding Results:**

There were a total of 549 comments.

Total	Theme	Percentage of Total
85	personal growth	15.48%
58	college reputation	10.56%
52	helpful	9.47%
49	value	8.93%
40	academics	7.29%
33	majors	6.01%
30	future job	5.46%
28	creation/choice	5.10%
28	well-rounded	5.10%
25	diversity	4.55%
top 10		
25	college competition	4.55%
20	support/in defense	3.64%
17	advising/negative	3.10%
16	word of mouth	2.91%
16	planning	2.91%
13	family influence	2.37%
13	collaboration	2.37%
13	interdisciplinary	2.37%
12	home	2.19%
12	confidence	2.19%
top 20		
11	friends	2.00%
9	advising/positive	1.64%
9	whole university	1.64%
8	admissions	1.46%
7	future plans	1.28%
7	community	1.28%
6	transfer out	1.09%
6	research	1.09%
5	undecided	0.91%
4	critical-thinking	0.73%
top 30		
4	resources	0.73%
3	supportive	0.55%
3	interests	0.55%
2	ability	0.36%
2	career	0.36%
2	proximity	0.36%

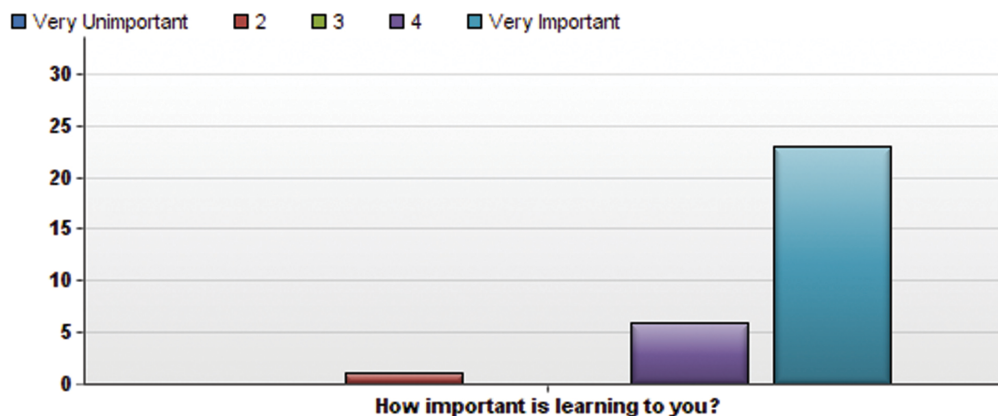
2	transfer in	0.36%
1	choice	0.18%
1	college value	0.18%
1	unhelpful	0.18%

Appendix J –

Online Survey Charts:

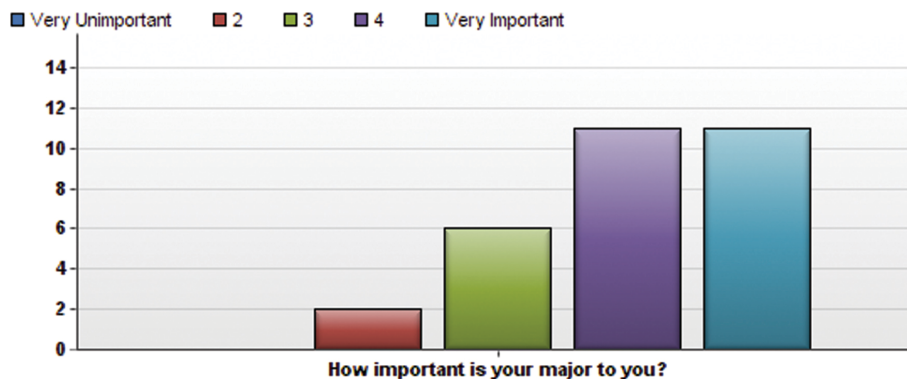
1. Please read the question carefully and then rate it how important it is to you, where 1 = very un...

#	Question	Very Unimportant	2	3	4	Very Important	Total Responses	Mean
1	How important is learning to you?	0	1	0	6	23	30	4.70



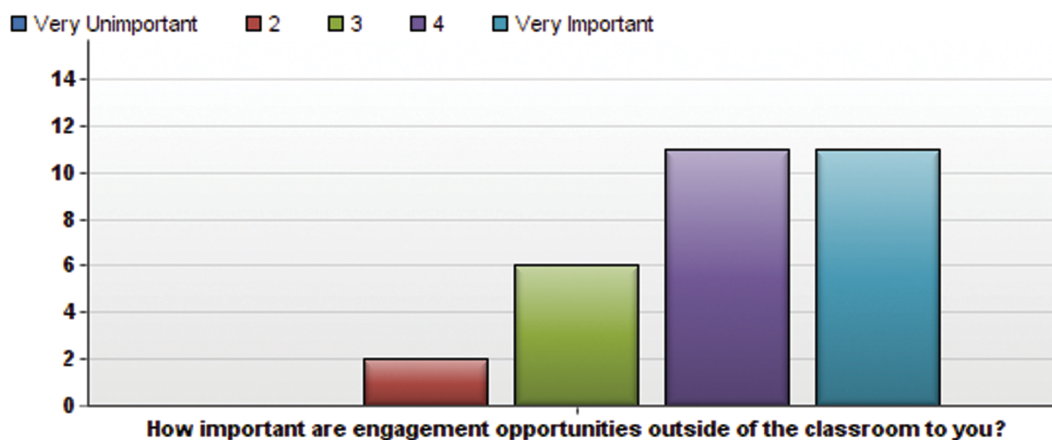
2. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how important it is to you, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important.

#	Question	Very Unimportant	2	3	4	Very Important	Total Responses	Mean
1	How important is your major to you?	0	2	6	11	11	30	4.03



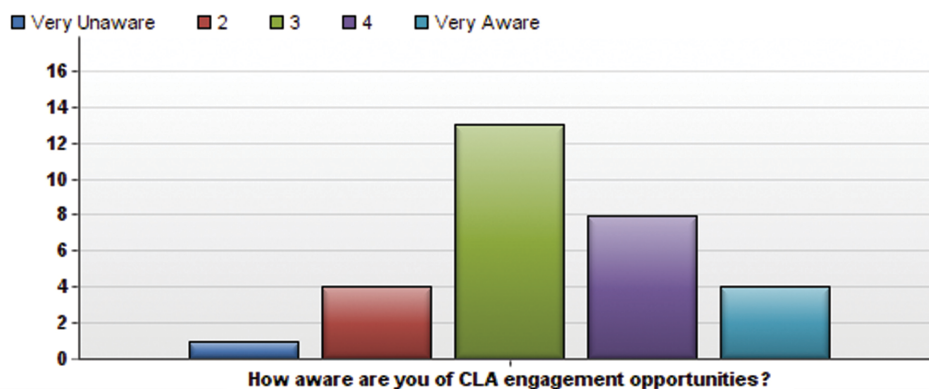
3. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how important it is to you, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important.

#	Question	Very Unimportant	2	3	4	Very Important	Total Responses	Mean
1	How important are engagement opportunities outside of the classroom to you?	0	2	6	11	11	30	4.13



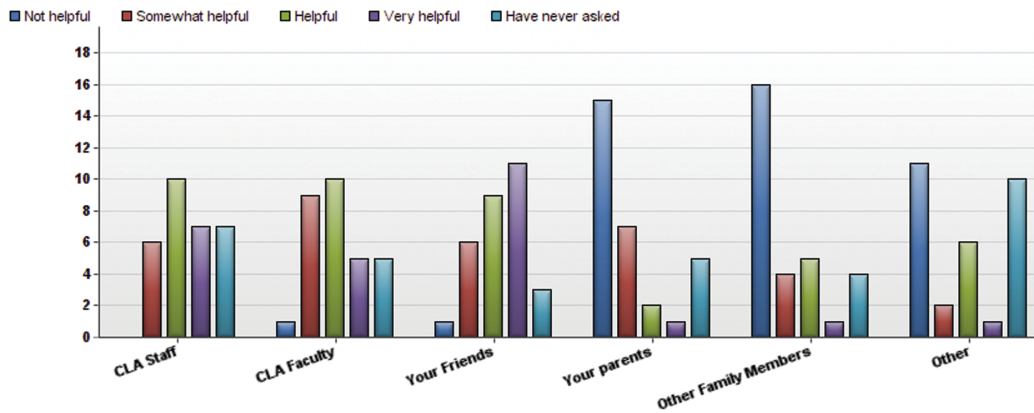
4. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on your awareness, where 1 = very unaware and 5 = very aware.

#	Question	Very Unaware	2	3	4	Very Aware	Total Responses	Mean
1	How aware are you of CLA engagement opportunities?	1	4	13	8	4	30	3.33



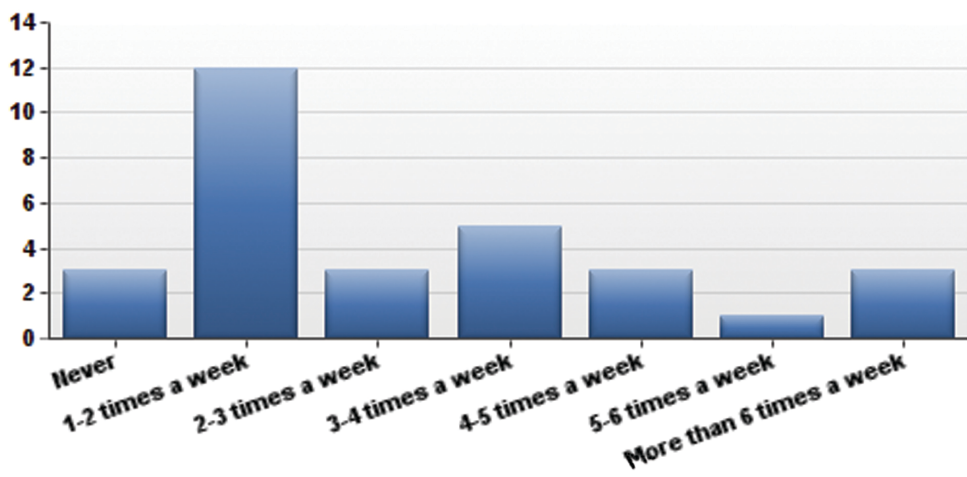
5. Please rate each of the following on how helpful they are at helping you find engagement opportun...

#	Question	Not helpful	Somewhat helpful	Helpful	Very helpful	Have never asked	Total Responses	Mean
1	CLA Staff	0	6	10	7	7	30	3.50
2	CLA Faculty	1	9	10	5	5	30	3.13
3	Your Friends	1	6	9	11	3	30	3.30
4	Your parents	15	7	2	1	5	30	2.13
5	Other Family Members	16	4	5	1	4	30	2.10
6	Other	11	2	6	1	10	30	2.90



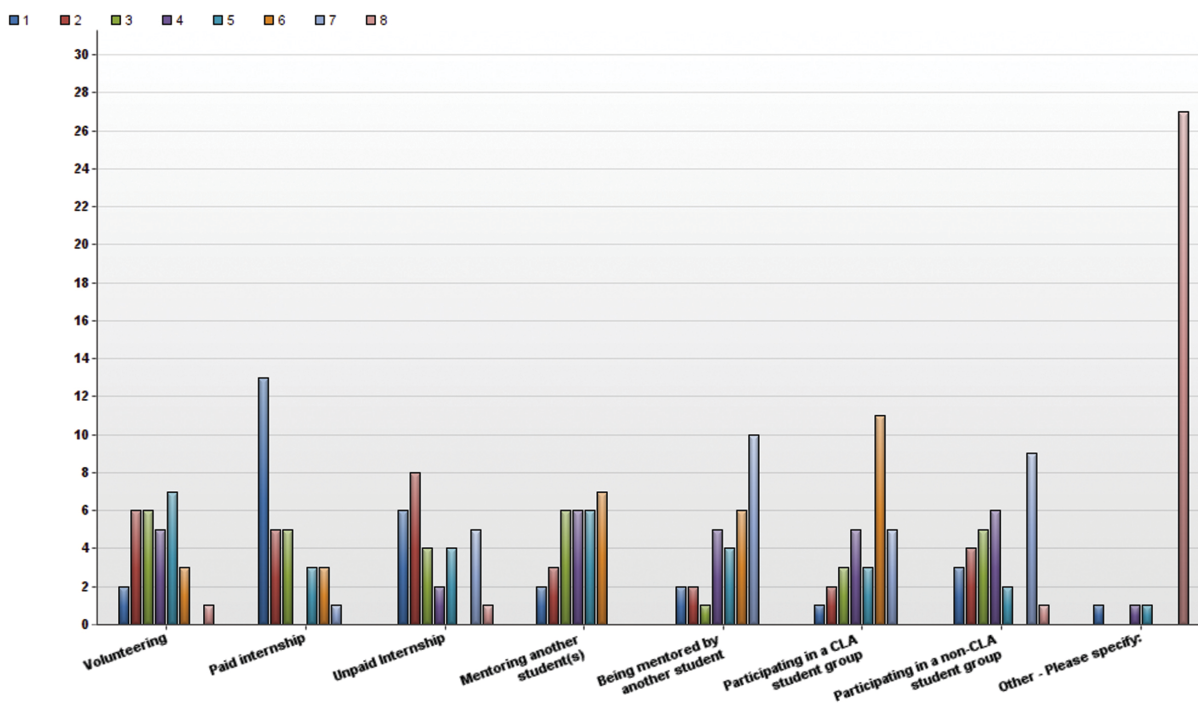
6. In an average week during the school year, how often do you participate in engagement opportunities outside the classroom?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Never		3	10%
2	1-2 times a week		12	40%
3	2-3 times a week		3	10%
4	3-4 times a week		5	17%
5	4-5 times a week		3	10%
6	5-6 times a week		1	3%
7	More than 6 times a week		3	10%
	Total		30	100%



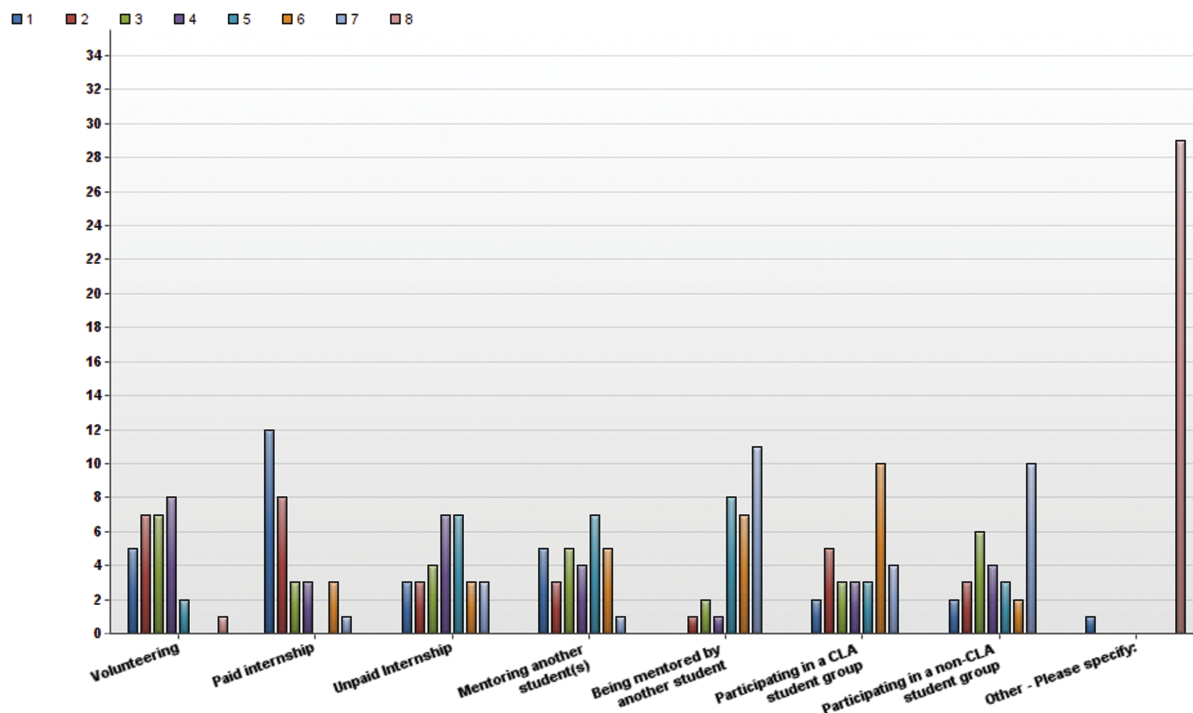
7. Please rank how valuable each of the following engagement opportunities are. A ranking of 1 means you think it's the most valuable. (Directional Note: Click on the number to the right, drag that...

Table Options -										
#	Answer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses
1	Volunteering	2	6	6	5	7	3	0	1	30
2	Paid internship	13	5	5	0	3	3	1	0	30
3	Unpaid Internship	6	8	4	2	4	0	5	1	30
4	Mentoring another student(s)	2	3	6	6	6	7	0	0	30
5	Being mentored by another student	2	2	1	5	4	6	10	0	30
6	Participating in a CLA student group	1	2	3	5	3	11	5	0	30
7	Participating in a non-CLA student group	3	4	5	6	2	0	9	1	30
8	Other - Please specify:	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	27	30
Total		30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	-



8. Please rank how likely you would be to participate in each of the following engagement opportunities are. A ranking of 1 means you'd prefer that opportunity most. (Directional Note: Click on the...

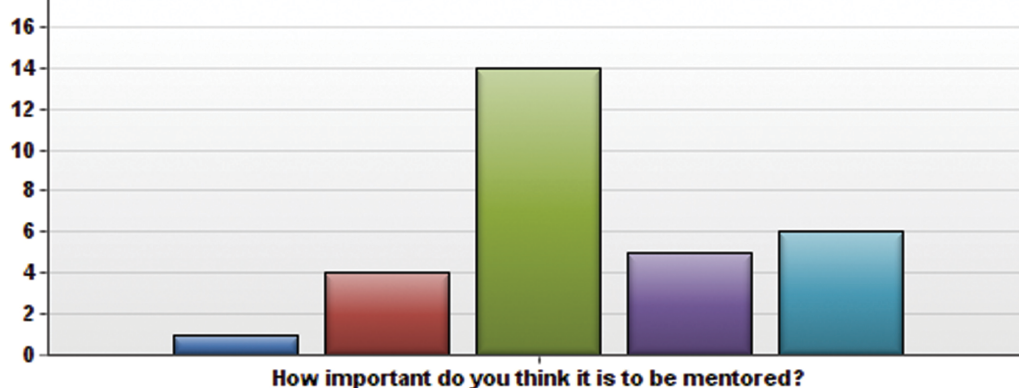
Table Options										
#	Answer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses
1	Volunteering	5	7	7	8	2	0	0	1	30
2	Paid internship	12	8	3	3	0	3	1	0	30
3	Unpaid Internship	3	3	4	7	7	3	3	0	30
4	Mentoring another student(s)	5	3	5	4	7	5	1	0	30
5	Being mentored by another student	0	1	2	1	8	7	11	0	30
6	Participating in a CLA student group	2	5	3	3	3	10	4	0	30
7	Participating in a non-CLA student group	2	3	6	4	3	2	10	0	30
8	Other - Please specify:	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	30
Total		30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	-



9. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how important it is to you, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important.

#	Question	Very Unimportant	2	3	4	Very Important	Total Responses	Mean
1	How important do you think it is to be mentored?	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	30	3.37

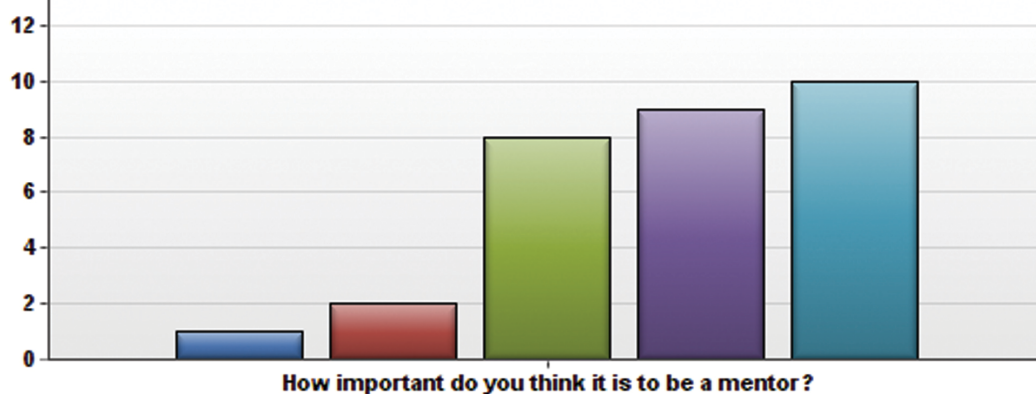
Very Unimportant 2 3 4 Very Important



10. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how important it is to you, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important.

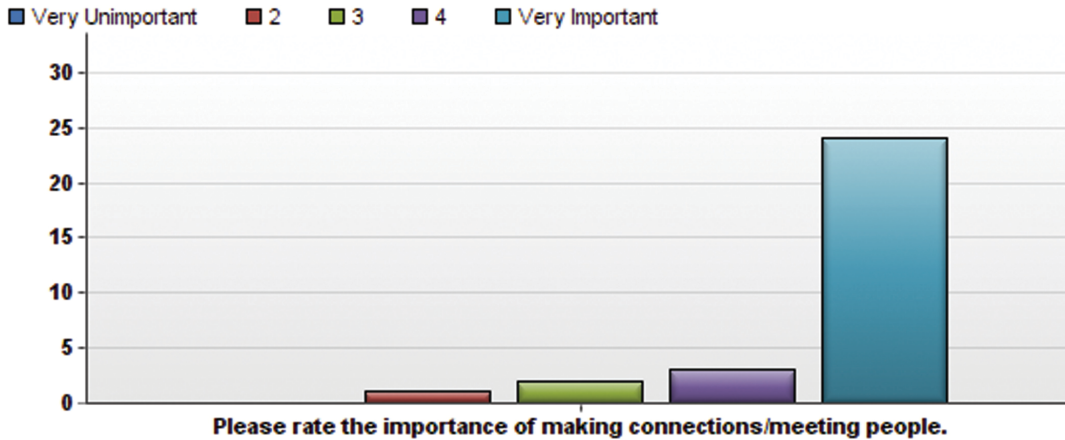
#	Question	Very Unimportant	2	3	4	Very Important	Total Responses	Mean
1	How important do you think it is to be a mentor?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	30	3.83

Very Unimportant 2 3 4 Very Important



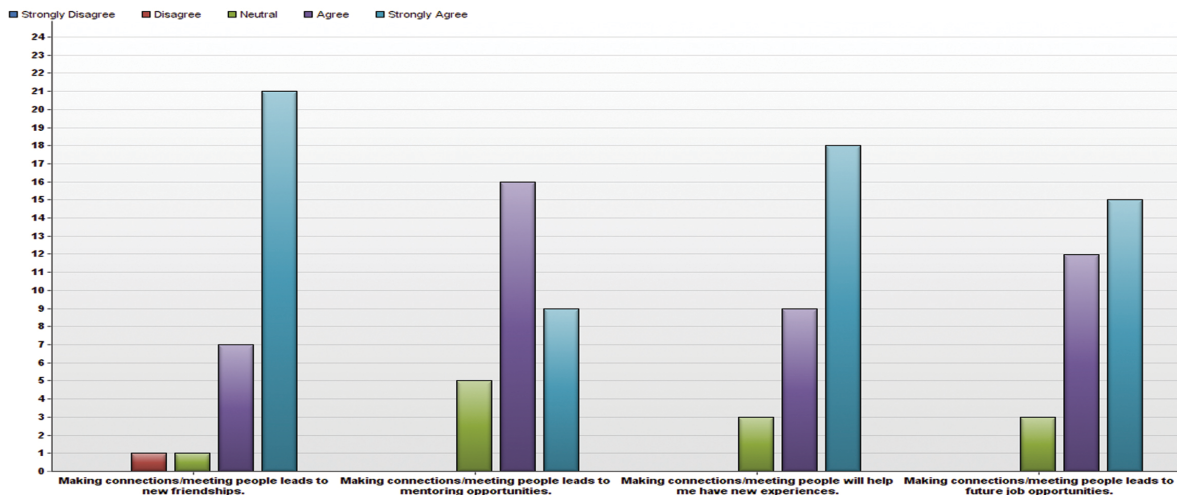
11. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how important it is to you, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important.

#	Question	Very Unimportant	2	3	4	Very Important	Total Responses	Mean
1	Please rate the importance of making connections/meeting people.	0	1	2	3	24	30	4.67



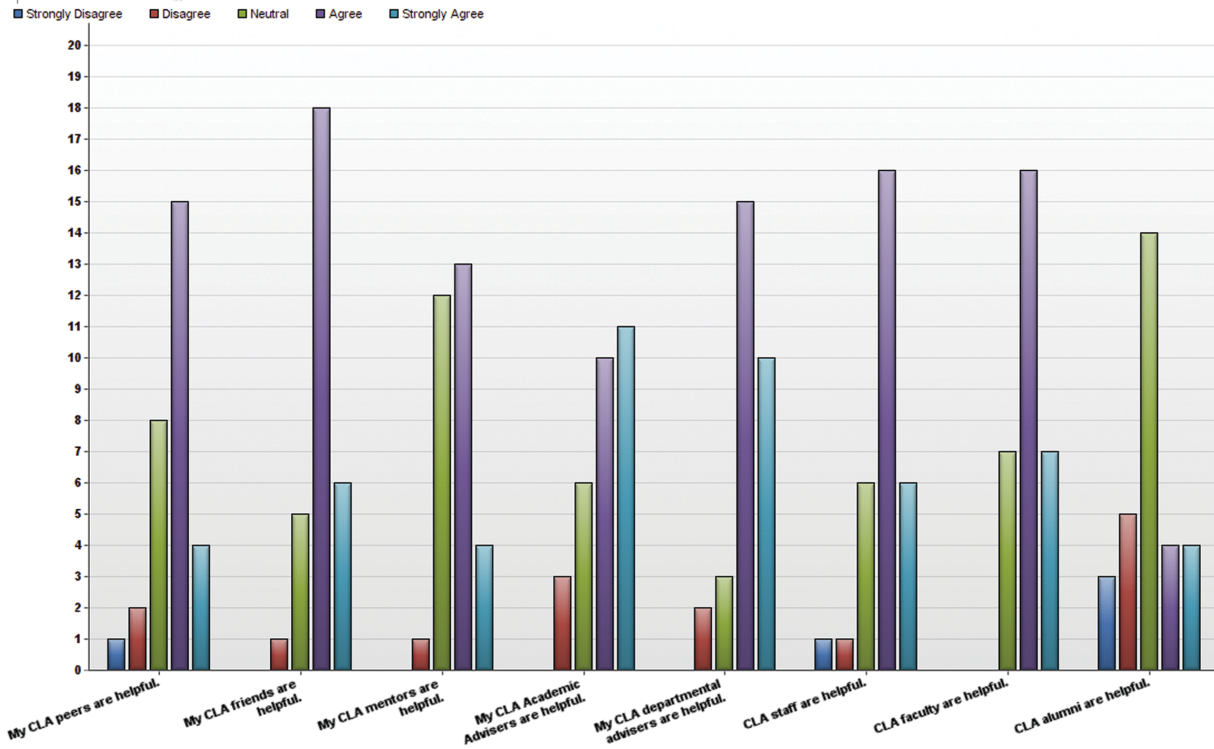
12. How strongly do you agree with the following statements?

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses	Mean
1	Making connections/meeting people leads to new friendships.	0	1	1	7	21	30	4.60
2	Making connections/meeting people leads to mentoring opportunities.	0	0	5	16	9	30	4.13
3	Making connections/meeting people will help me have new experiences.	0	0	3	9	18	30	4.50
4	Making connections/meeting people leads to future job opportunities.	0	0	3	12	15	30	4.40



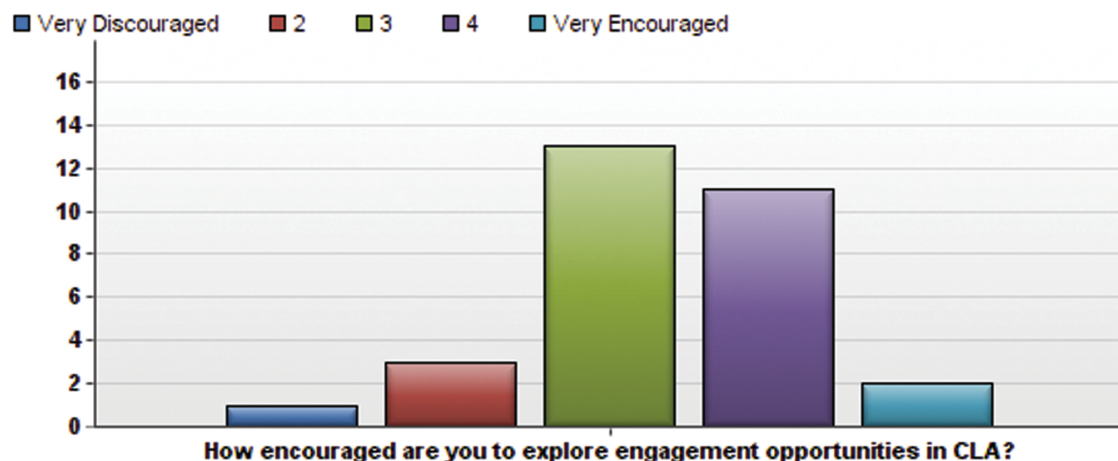
13. How strongly do you agree with the following statements?

Table Options -							
#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses
1	My CLA peers are helpful.	1	2	8	15	4	30
2	My CLA friends are helpful.	0	1	5	18	6	30
3	My CLA mentors are helpful.	0	1	12	13	4	30
4	My CLA Academic Advisers are helpful.	0	3	6	10	11	30
5	My CLA departmental advisers are helpful.	0	2	3	15	10	30
6	CLA staff are helpful.	1	1	6	16	6	30
7	CLA faculty are helpful.	0	0	7	16	7	30
8	CLA alumni are helpful.	3	5	14	4	4	30



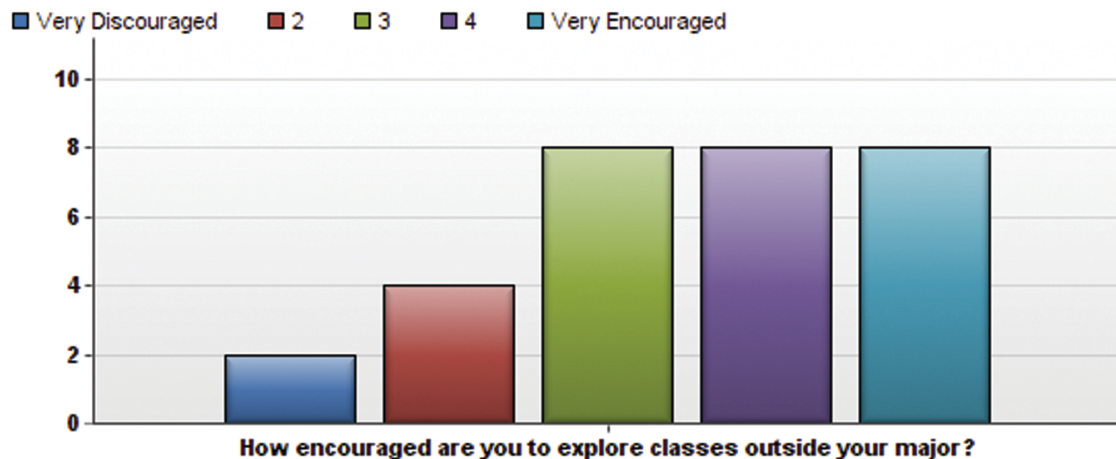
14. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how encouraged you are, where 1 = very discouraged and 5 = very encouraged.

#	Question	Very Discouraged	2	3	4	Very Encouraged	Total Responses	Mean
1	How encouraged are you to explore engagement opportunities in CLA?	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>2</u>	30	3.33



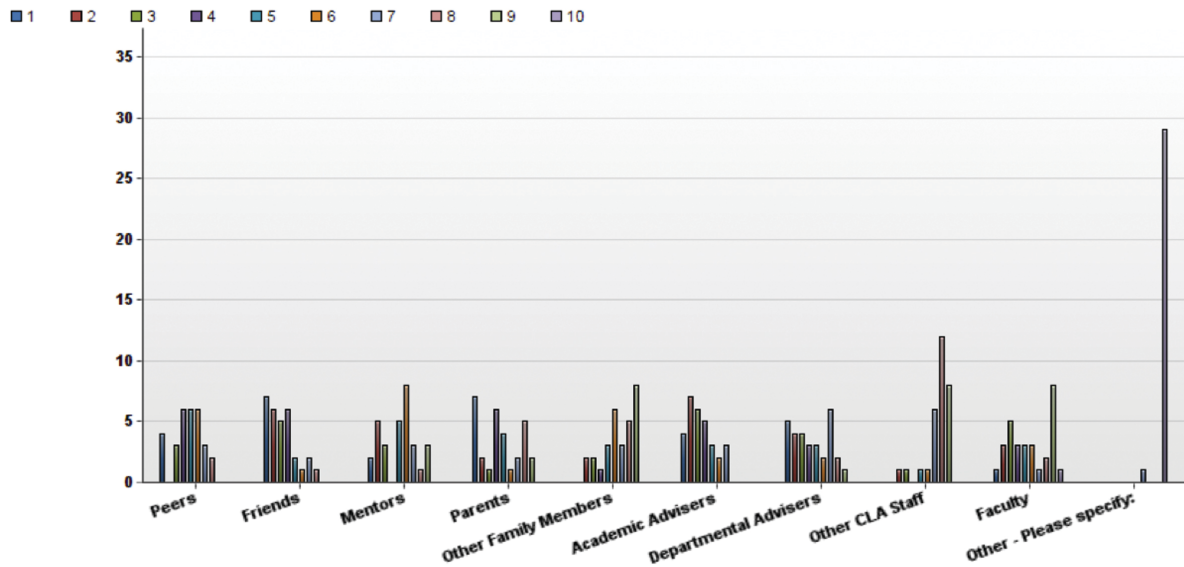
15. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how encouraged you are, where 1 = very discouraged and 5 = very encouraged.

#	Question	Very Discouraged	2	3	4	Very Encouraged	Total Responses	Mean
1	How encouraged are you to explore classes outside your major?	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	30	3.53



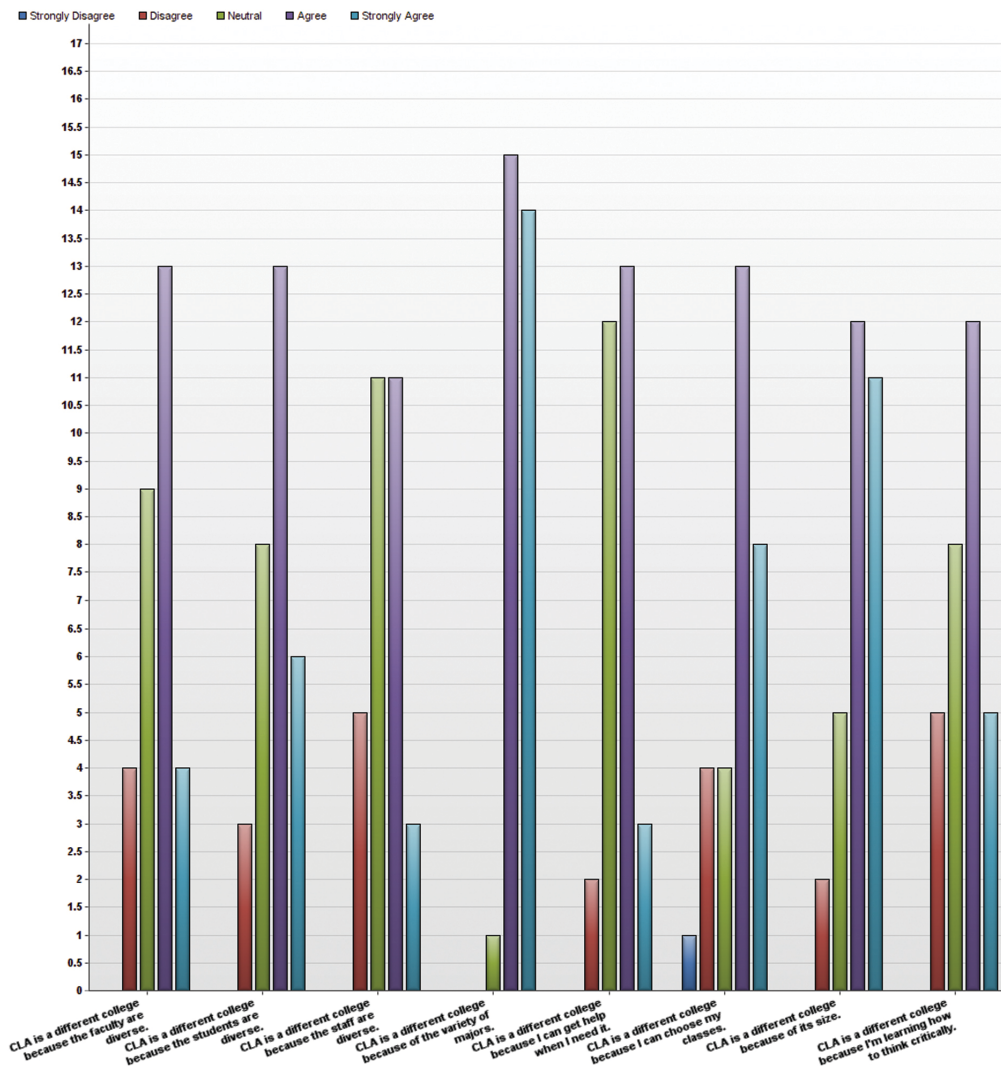
16. Please rank by importance each of the following in your decision-making processes. (Directional Note: Click on the number to the right, drag that selection, and drop it into your preferred order.)

Table Options ✕												
#	Answer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total Responses
1	Peers	4	0	3	6	6	6	3	2	0	0	30
2	Friends	7	6	5	6	2	1	2	1	0	0	30
3	Mentors	2	5	3	0	5	8	3	1	3	0	30
4	Parents	7	2	1	6	4	1	2	5	2	0	30
5	Other Family Members	0	2	2	1	3	6	3	5	8	0	30
6	Academic Advisers	4	7	6	5	3	2	3	0	0	0	30
7	Departmental Advisers	5	4	4	3	3	2	6	2	1	0	30
8	Other CLA Staff	0	1	1	0	1	1	6	12	8	0	30
9	Faculty	1	3	5	3	3	3	1	2	8	1	30
10	Other - Please specify:	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	29	30
	Total	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	-



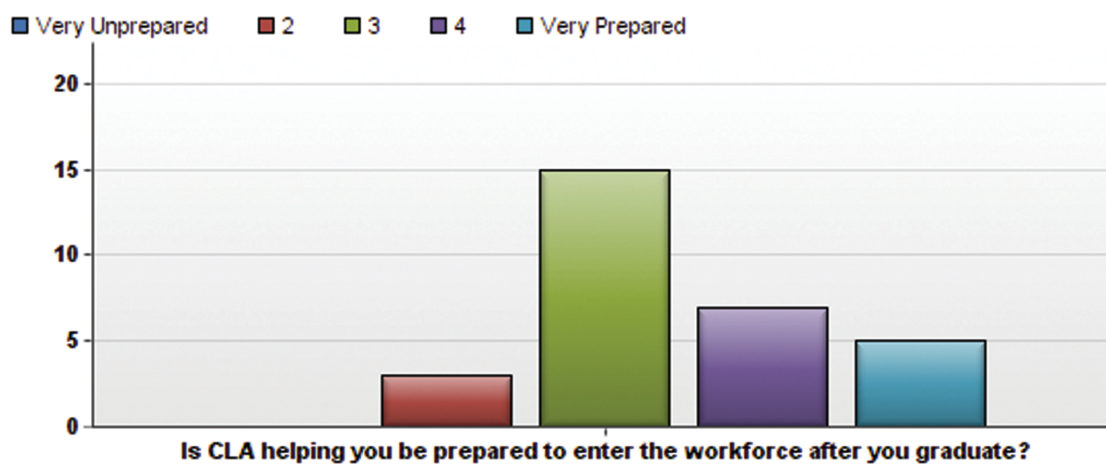
17. How strongly do you agree with the following statements?

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses	Mean
1	CLA is a different college because the faculty are diverse.	0	4	9	13	4	30	3.57
2	CLA is a different college because the students are diverse.	0	3	8	13	6	30	3.73
3	CLA is a different college because the staff are diverse.	0	5	11	11	3	30	3.40
4	CLA is a different college because of the variety of majors.	0	0	1	15	14	30	4.43
5	CLA is a different college because I can get help when I need it.	0	2	12	13	3	30	3.57
6	CLA is a different college because I can choose my classes.	1	4	4	13	8	30	3.77
7	CLA is a different college because of its size.	0	2	5	12	11	30	4.07
8	CLA is a different college because I'm learning how to think critically.	0	5	8	12	5	30	3.57



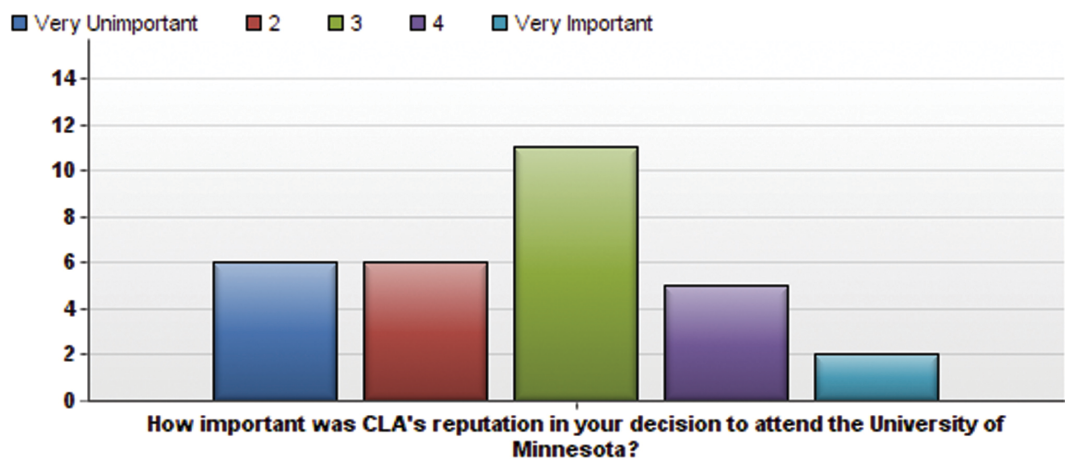
18. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how much CLA is preparing you, where 1 = very unprepared and 5 = very prepared.

#	Question	Very Unprepared	2	3	4	Very Prepared	Total Responses	Mean
1	Is CLA helping you be prepared to enter the workforce after you graduate?	0	3	15	7	5	30	3.47



19. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how important, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important.

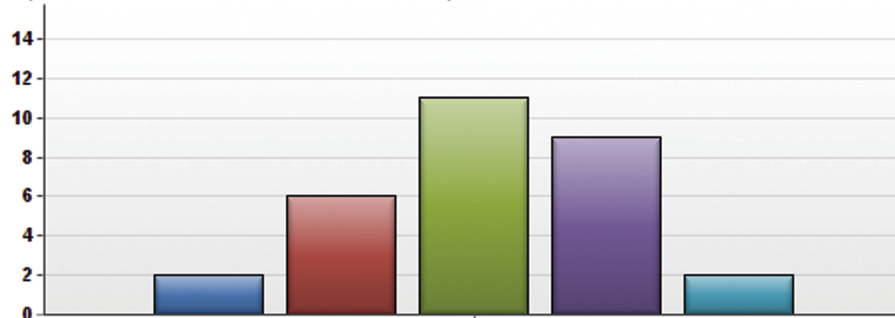
#	Question	Very Unimportant	2	3	4	Very Important	Total Responses	Mean
1	How important was CLA's reputation in your decision to attend the University of Minnesota?	6	6	11	5	2	30	2.70



20. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how much CLA's reputation would affect your decision, where 1 = very unaffected and 5 = very affected.

#	Question	Very Unaffected	2	3	4	Very Affected	Total Responses	Mean
1	How much does CLA's reputation affect a recommendation you might make to a friend or family member to attend the University of Minnesota?	2	6	11	9	2	30	3.10

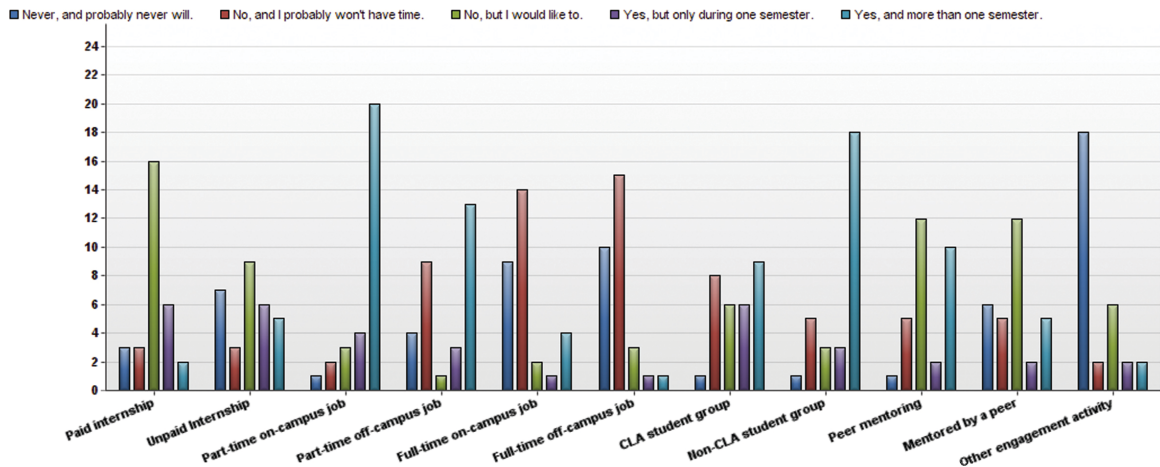
■ Very Unaffected ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ Very Affected



How much does CLA's reputation affect a recommendation you might make to a friend or family member to attend the University of Minnesota?

21. Have you ever participated in the following engagement activities?

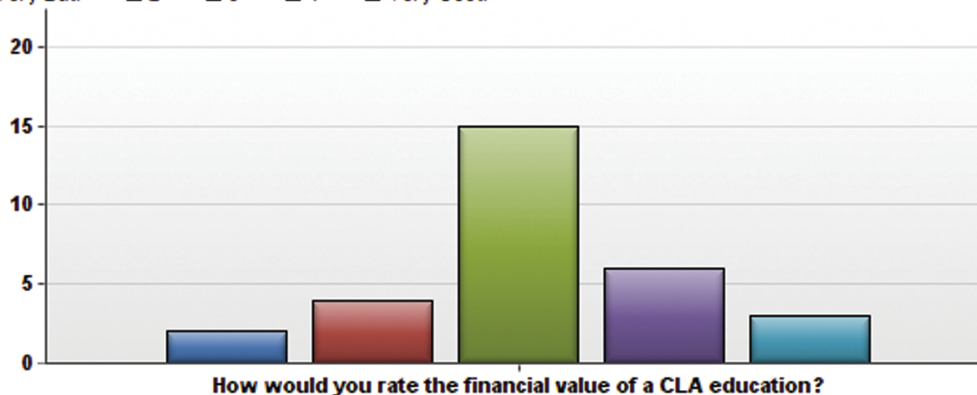
Table Options								
#	Question	Never, and probably never will.	No, and I probably won't have time.	No, but I would like to.	Yes, but only during one semester.	Yes, and more than one semester.	Total Responses	Mean
1	Paid internship	3	3	16	6	2	30	3.03
2	Unpaid Internship	7	3	9	6	5	30	2.97
3	Part-time on-campus job	1	2	3	4	20	30	4.33
4	Part-time off-campus job	4	9	1	3	13	30	3.40
5	Full-time on-campus job	9	14	2	1	4	30	2.23
6	Full-time off-campus job	10	15	3	1	1	30	1.93
7	CLA student group	1	8	6	6	9	30	3.47
8	Non-CLA student group	1	5	3	3	18	30	4.07
9	Peer mentoring	1	5	12	2	10	30	3.50
10	Mentored by a peer	6	5	12	2	5	30	2.83
11	Other engagement activity	18	2	6	2	2	30	1.93



22. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on value, where 1 = very bad and 5 = very good.

#	Question	Very Bad	2	3	4	Very Good	Total Responses	Mean
1	How would you rate the financial value of a CLA education?	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>	30	3.13

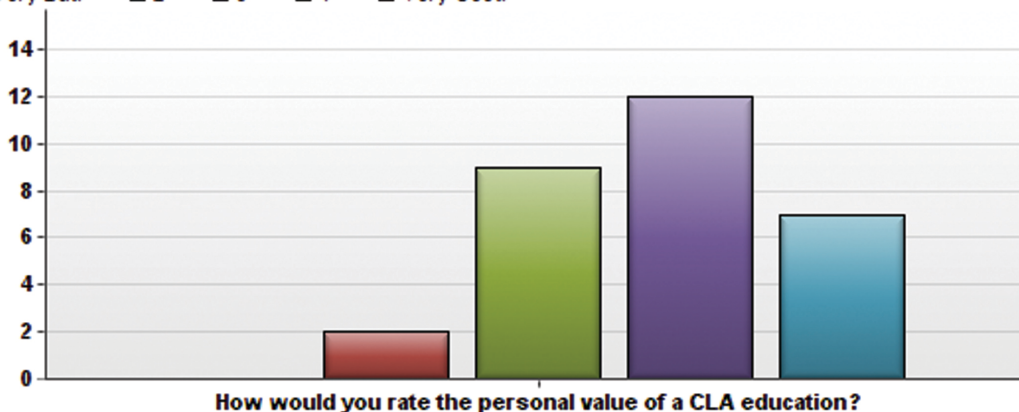
■ Very Bad ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ Very Good



23. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on value, where 1 = very bad and 5 = very good.

#	Question	Very Bad	2	3	4	Very Good	Total Responses	Mean
1	How would you rate the personal value of a CLA education?	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>7</u>	30	3.80

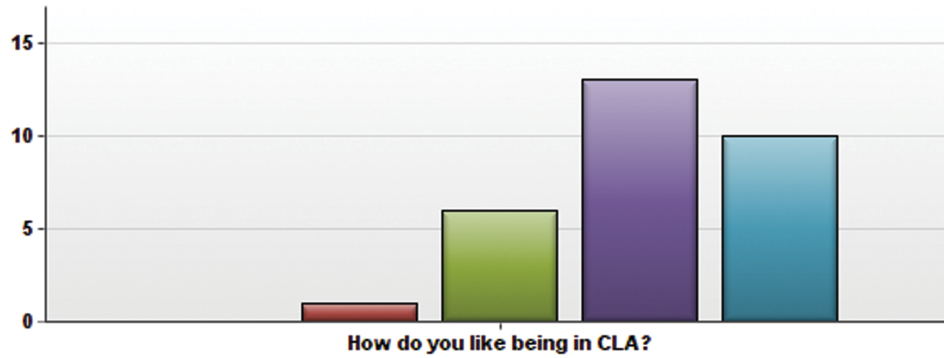
■ Very Bad ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ Very Good



24. Please read the question carefully and then rate it on how well you like, where 1 = really don't like and 5 = really like.

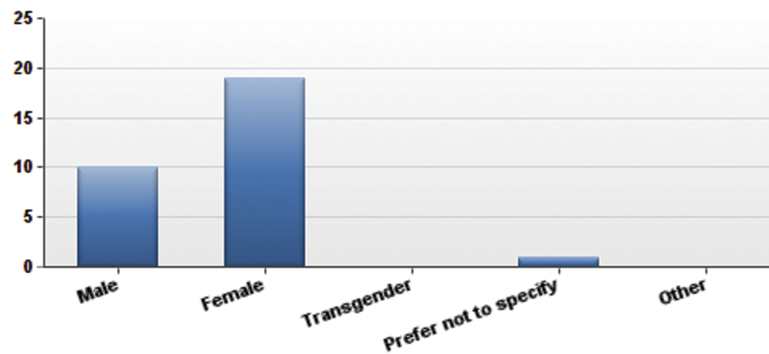
Table Options							
#	Question	I'd like to transfer.	Don't really like it.	Don't have a choice; it's where my major is.	Like It	Love It!	Total Responses
1	How do you like being in CLA?	0	1	6	13	10	30

☐ I'd like to transfer.
 ☐ Don't really like it.
 ☐ Don't have a choice; it's where my major is.
 ☐ Like It
 ☐ Love It!



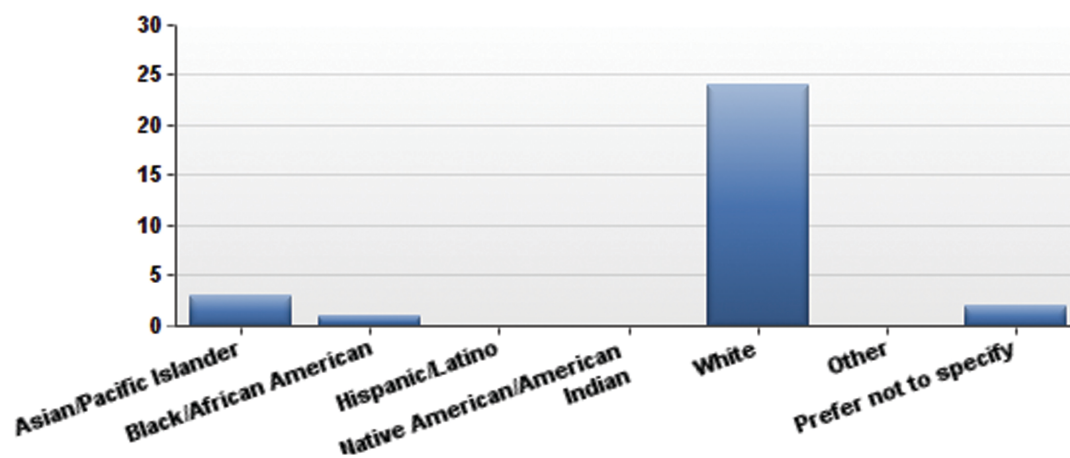
25. What is your gender?

Table Options			
#	Answer	Response	%
1	Male	10	33%
2	Female	19	63%
3	Transgender	0	0%
4	Prefer not to specify	1	3%
5	Other	0	0%
	Total	30	100%



27. Please specify your ethnicity:

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Asian/Pacific Islander		3	10%
2	Black/African American		1	3%
3	Hispanic/Latino		0	0%
4	Native American/American Indian		0	0%
5	White		24	80%
6	Other		0	0%
7	Prefer not to specify		2	7%
	Total		30	100%



Note: Charts not available for rank order questions 26, 28, and 29.